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### THIS WEEK IN THE TIMES

TODAY	TOMORROW	THE TIMES
WIN DESIGNER CLOTHING £20,000 worth of dream fashions, page 16	✓ PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT 16-page supplement on the primary league tables	Primary Schools Report

WEDNESDAY
EMPIRE BUILDING Why Star Wars is back in business ✓ PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT Testing time for the tests

THURSDAY
✓ PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT Why nursery schools matter PLUS: Matthew Parris and Tessa Blackstone

FRIDAY
✓ PRIMARY SCHOOLS REPORT Robert Crampton journeys to the heart of Cantona

SATURDAY
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THE TIMES + BEST FOR NEWS + BEST FOR SPORT + BEST FOR ARTS AND BOOKS

Shadow Foreign Secretary is accused of making irresponsible charges

## Cook angers Tories in 'racist links' row

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ROBIN COOK angered Tory ministers last night after he linked speeches by Michael Portillo and John Redwood to racist remarks made last week by the Tory MP David Evans.

The Shadow Foreign Secretary was accused of making "scurrilous and irresponsible charges of racism" by Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary.

Mr Dorrell called on Tony Blair to take action against Mr Cook but aides to the Labour leader made clear last night that he backed the remarks. Mr Cook said that speeches in which Mr Portillo and Mr Redwood had criticised Europe bred the type of re-

marks made by Mr Evans. His comment that "chauvinism and xenophobia are the parents of bigotry and racism" provoked angry reactions from all three Conservatives named in his speech.

Mr Cook told the Scottish Labour conference at the weekend that Mr Portillo's and Mr Redwood's views on Europe echoed "the poisonous views of David Evans on blacks and women". Mr Evans, MP for Welwyn Hatfield, claimed that many women MPs were "ordinary" and made an outspoken attack on a black rapist.

Mr Dorrell said Mr Cook



Cook: caused disquiet among his colleagues

had "said some absolutely outrageous things about my colleagues. There is no founda-

tation at all in anything that Michael Portillo or John Redwood said for the charges Robin Cook made," Mr Dorrell told BBC's *Breakfast with Frost*. "I am wholly opposed to making personal unfounded and scurrilous attacks on politicians."

However, a spokesman for Mr Blair defended Mr Cook's comments and Chris Smith, the Shadow Health Secretary, said that Mr Cook was pointing out "the Little Englander nature of much of the debate in the Tory party".

Mr Cook has been at the centre of a series of high-profile incidents in the past fortnight, causing disquiet among colleagues this week

when he suggested that Labour was about to secure a landslide victory. The comment came as Mr Blair was trying to guard against complacency and the Labour leader's reassertion that a general election victory could not be taken for granted was seen as a thinly veiled put-down for Mr Cook.

Yesterday, Mr Cook pulled back from his earlier projection, offering a much more cautious assessment of Labour's chances. After making clear that Labour's devolution plans would need a majority of MPs in England, as well as Scotland and Wales, Mr Cook said: "At the present time it looks as if we can be

hopeful that we are going to get that majority in England as well as in Scotland."

Such a result would still represent a substantial swing to Labour but well short of its landslide victory of 1945. The party has only 196 of the 524 MPs in England, needing a further 62 for a majority.

Mr Cook also made clear yesterday that Labour's plans to introduce large numbers of party supporters into the Lords to balance the built-in Tory majority would happen only over the lifetime of a Parliament. When the idea was mooted last year, there were suggestions that there would be a huge influx of Labour peers in the first year.

## Maths A level to be replaced by modular courses

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

THE traditional mathematics A level, taken entirely by final examination, is to disappear within three years and be replaced by "easier" modular courses.

Academics yesterday said that standards of higher level mathematics would be threatened by the move, which is designed to attract more students to stay on for A level.

There has been a huge increase in demand for modular courses, where sections roughly equivalent to a term's work are examined as they are completed, and retakes of each segment are allowed.

Their popularity has led the three A level examination boards to prepare all their A level mathematics courses in pass-as-you-go form following the next change of syllabus in 2000.

The disclosure comes despite fears about the rigour of modular examinations, which led Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Secretary, to limit the number of retakes to one per unit.

The only major academic study of the new-style courses found that pupils of the same ability consistently scored a grade higher at modular than on the traditional "linear" syllabus.

Dr John Marks, a member of the board of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, said he would call for an urgent review to ensure schools would still have a separate traditional syllabus. "I will pursue this because I think this is a worrying dev-

elopment and a trend which I suspect is not just limited to mathematics," Dr Marks said.

"It was the traditional linear course which set the standard of A level and there has been a lot of concern that the modular course is 'easier', which is one of the reasons why SCAA has been trying to revise the rules for modular courses."

A spokeswoman for the authority, which polices all the courses set for public examination, said: "It will still be possible for students to take all papers at the end of the course, if they choose, so the linear option will remain."

But Dr Marks said this would not create a coherent two-year course. "It is easier to do a modular A level because you have a second bite of the cherry and you do it in bits. You are not getting an overview of students' capacity in the subject totally."

Supporters of modular courses said they helped maintain standards because they motivated students to work consistently for the whole two years.

Labour would abolish national primary school performance tables but require education authorities to publish them locally. David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary said yesterday.

The figures would also have to be published four months earlier than the Government's tables, due out tomorrow, so that they would be in time for parents to use them to choose schools.

## Labour's guide to surviving Brussels

By VALERIE ELLIOTT  
WHITEHALL EDITOR

A SURVIVAL guide for future Labour ministers to cope with Brussels life and the rigours of European political meetings has been prepared by party officials.

After 18 years of Conservative rule, senior Labour strategists are concerned that their frontbenchers are not sufficiently acquainted with the rules and etiquette of European meetings, particularly over policy sessions which last

well into the night. Labour spokesmen have been issued with three golden rules: keep up the stamina, stay off whisky, and flatter European counterparts.

Future Labour ministers

have also been told to brush up on their foreign languages, and that being able to chat with their counterparts will be a bonus.

They are making an effort. The instructions are part of Labour's preparation for government, which also includes grooming in how to ambush meetings, and using procedural ploys to achieve decisions in Britain's interest.

But a senior diplomat

warned last week: "Politicians must not be too constant; they are likely to have to change alliances several times in one day. It is a game that they can get good at with practice."

Most of the briefing has been prepared by former civil servants and diplomats. Practical tips have also been offered by Pauline Green, British MEP and leader of the Socialist group in the European Parliament, and by Neil Kinnock, former Labour leader and now a European Commissioner.

Sir George's remarks came on the eve of key meetings between Mr Major and his senior advisers at which the timing of the election announcement will be discussed. It could come later this week, but if he wanted Mr Major could delay for two or even three weeks. However, when activists gather at Bath this Friday for a two-day Central Council meeting marking the campaign's start, they will know the date: the last day for calling an April 10 election is on Wednesday.

In Reigate, Sir George's presence is not seen as a threat to Tory hopes of keeping a seat they hold with a 17,644 majority.

## Gardiner

Continued from page 1  
run out of ideas. However, the timing and strength of Sir George's comments were acknowledged to be damaging at the start of a week seen as crucial to Tory attempts to rebuild morale. Sir George said: "Tory seats are going to go down the pan with an almighty flush when the election comes. And the writing was on the wall wasn't it at the Wirral? The Tory backbenchers are by no means illiterate."

Although Sir George said that he had had six or seven calls from Tory MPs supporting his move, none backed him publicly yesterday. One Eurosceptic, Sir Ted Taylor, Tory MP for Southend East, said: "If George's defection results in us looking at the referendum issue again, it could possibly turn out to be a bonus instead of a problem."

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Sir George Gardiner in London yesterday

## Parents pay to prevent school cuts

Families have volunteered to donate £150 a year to avoid staff cuts at a leading state school. The grant-maintained Royal Grammar School in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, was sixth among state schools for A-level results last year, but says it has lost £425,000 in government grants since 1993. David Levin, headmaster of the 1,200-pupil boys' school, said that the initiative for the donations came from parents anxious to maintain standards.

### Herald service

The 193 passengers and seamen who died in the *Herald of Free Enterprise* disaster 10 years ago were remembered at a service in St Mary's church, Dover, yesterday. More than 400 members of bereaved families, survivors, shipmates, rescue workers, counsellors and friends attended the service, conducted by the Rev Graham Batten.

### Ferry collision

Cross Channel services were disrupted last night after a catamaran carrying 206 passengers collided with a stationary ferry in fog at Ramsgate harbour, Kent. A child received slight ankle injuries and there was some damage to both vessels, owned by Holymen Sally Ferries. Services today are unlikely to be affected.

### Council attack

Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Secretary, is considering sending a "hit squad" of education experts into Calderdale council in west Yorkshire. The local authority, responsible for the controversial Ridings School in Halifax, will today be condemned for its weak leadership in a report by school inspectors.

### Work for bomber

The IRA bomber serving a life sentence for the murder of Earl Mountbatten has been allowed out to work on building sites around Dublin. Tommy McMahon, 48, returns to Mountjoy prison in the evening. Irish Government sources emphasised that McMahon, who was sentenced in 1979, would not be granted full release.

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It is in the nature of literature that books may derive from or be influenced by others, Swift says

## I have always acknowledged debt to Faulkner

**JOHN FROW** plainly does not like my novel. He suggests it is "pointless and flabby". I would be a sad writer if I could not live with the fact that some people do not like my book, but, happily, many people do like it and many a critique of *Last Orders* has been written and many a personal letter sent to me by those who like it deeply.

The point about the debt to *As I Lay Dying* is not new. It was made prominently in one of the first reviews of *Last Orders*, in *The Times* (January 18, 1996), which praised my novel for how it drew on Faulkner and also, emphatically, for its intrinsic merit. It has been made in other reviews and put to me in interviews and at public events. I have never pretended the connection is not there.

But the great number of reviews and commentaries which do not mention Faulkner suggest that the connection is hardly the nub of my book. Indeed, other writers are mentioned: Chaucer, for example, because my novel involves a group of characters journeying from London through Kent; T.S. Eliot, because the destination is Margate and Eliot has some lines about Margate. The first echo I was conscious of, the second never occurred to me. But it is one supposed not to write about travellers in Kent because of Chaucer, or about Margate because of Eliot? It is in the nature of literature that books may derive from or be influenced by others. Equally,

■ Graham Swift responds to criticism that he borrowed from William Faulkner's novel, *As I Lay Dying*, for his book, *Last Orders*



Swift's novel is different

there are certain things for which there is no literary patent or monopoly. How do you write about a group of travellers on what effectively is a sort of pilgrimage, without evoking Chaucer? How do you write a story in which the living deal intimately with the remains of the dead and not evoke Faulkner's classic? Some stories are themselves so basic, so perennial, so likely to involve us all, that they are told and need to be told many times. The question is: how does each telling offer up its own vision and create its inherent world? The carrying — handling and mishandling — of a jar of ashes offers very different narrative possibilities and a quite different range

of scenes from a rotting corpse on a lumbering wagon. As people keep reminding me, it is a much more common actual situation. Bermondsey and Kent are not Mississippi. London English is not Mississippi English. Where in Faulkner are my butchers, undertakers and second-hand car dealers? Where is the extensive reanimation of the dead person so that he becomes as much an active presence as the living ones, and where is the pattern of chapters detailing the manner and peculiar solicitudes of his death? Where in Faulkner is the world, the memory, the lore of my generation of characters whose experience includes on the one hand the bombing of London and war service in North Africa, and on the other the paraphernalia of pubs, racetracks, betting shops and camper-vans, or that whole sentimental-cum-atavistic mythology of the English seaside?

Not addressing such things, Mr. Frow makes much of certain technical similarities, without reflecting that they are indeed technical or incidental. That I use, like Faulkner, alternating first-person narratives: well, I have done this before in another novel, and it is not such a peculiar literary method — the shifting point of view — that it should not be open to all. That I have a chapter ascribed to the dead person: its voice, in fact, is that of the dead person's father, and the dead person anyway is given plenty of opportunity to speak elsewhere. That I have a chapter consisting of numbered points: this is a list of a gambler's guiding rules and so is properly set out as a list. That I include, like Faulkner, a chapter of just one line — two words in my case, five in Faulkner's: heaven forbid that only one writer should be allowed a one-line chapter.

But here Mr. Frow gets contradictory, saying that my one-line chapter "can't stand the comparison" to Faulkner and that Faulkner's chapter, "My mother is a fish", has a cosmic quality whereas my chapter ... well, it's just one man calling three other men "Old buggers". Am I being ticked off here for not being like Faulkner? For not being cosmic? Could it not be that my "old buggers" has a different function in a different narrative and belongs to a different fictional texture? But this is exactly the case. My novel can, understandably, be compared to Faulkner's but does not stand comparison to it. It's a different book.

Continued from page 1  
*Orders* in its plot and formal structure, is almost identical to that novel, without acknowledgement and without even, as far as I can see, the kind of knowing nod towards the earlier novel that would have made this acceptable. These are tricky issues but the borrowing (if that's the right word) is substantial."

Carmen Callil, the writer and founder of Virago, who chaired last year's panel of Booker judges, dismissed the

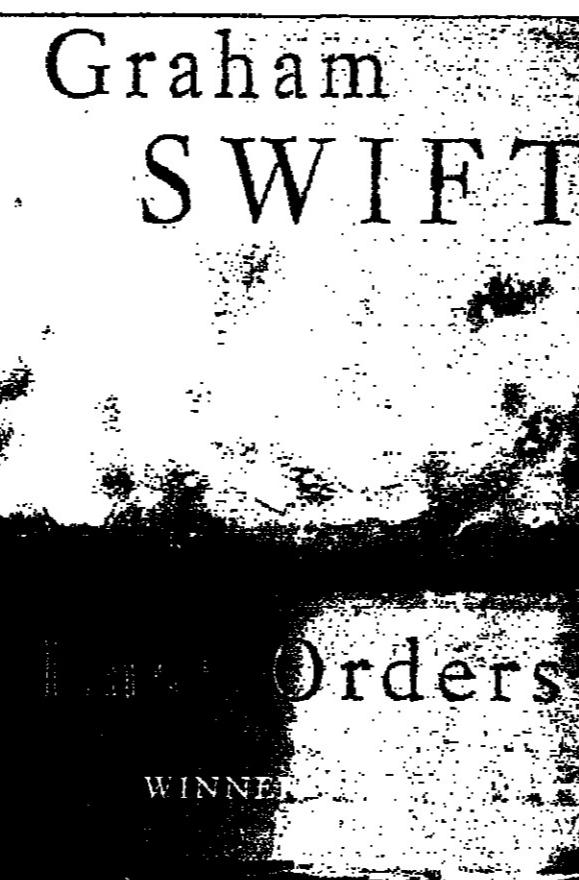
argument. She said: "People steal from each other all the time. He couldn't have chosen a better person to be influenced by in my view. I am currently writing a book about the 200 best English novels since 1950 and I am definitely going to include it among them."

Support also came from Malcolm Bradbury, the novelist and Emeritus Professor

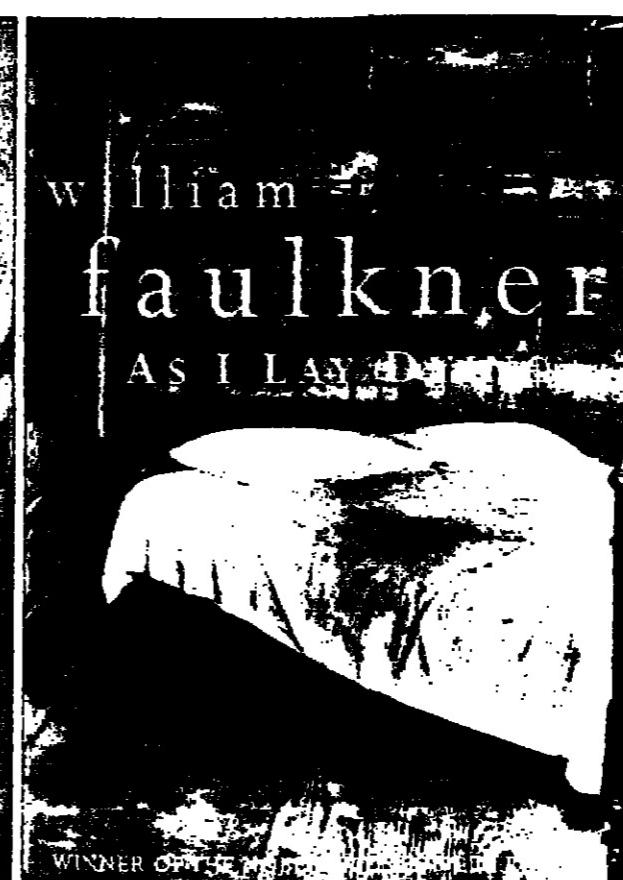
Literature is filled with borrowed tales."

Both books tell how the family and friends of a recently deceased character take the remains on a journey.

In Faulkner, a body is moved across the country for burial in Jackson County, Mississippi. In Swift's book, the ashes of a butcher are taken from Bermondsey, south London, to be scattered on the sea at Margate. Some chapters in both books are only a word or two long.



WINNER OF THE BOOKER PRIZE



WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

Writer bred on sound and fury of Deep South

By IAN MURRAY

WILLIAM FAULKNER (1897-1962) was Mississippi born and bred, proud of his southern heritage and of his great-grandfather, who served with distinction in the American Civil War. He became best known for a cycle of books that developed the history of the Deep South as a fable of human destiny everywhere.

He was a desultory university student, more interested in reading Omar Khayyam than regimented study. He joined the RAF in the First World War and was shot down twice. Returning to Mississippi and university, he attended intermittently for two years and never graduated.

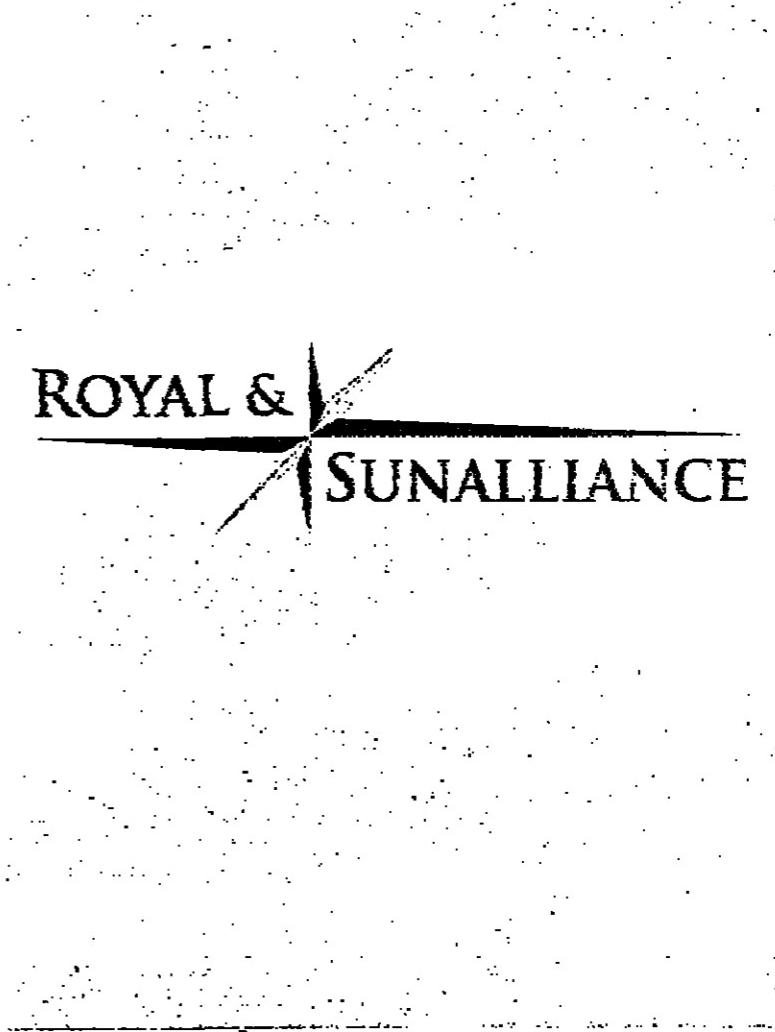
His first published work was a poem in a New Orleans magazine, *The Sound and the Fury*, his first great novel, written in a stream-of-consciousness style, was published in 1929. It was panned by the critics.

Unable to live by writing alone, he took a job as night superintendent of a power plant and there, with an upturned wheelbarrow for a desk, wrote *As I Lay Dying* (1930). Other novels included *Absalom, Absalom!* and *Interuder in the Dust*. He went to Hollywood and wrote screenplays, including *The Big Sleep*. Faulkner was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1949.

## Author answers critic



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## Times book reviewer hailed a 'redemptive adaptation'

**CLAIRE MESSUD**, who reviewed *Last Orders* for *The Times* last year, pointed out Swift's debt to Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, and considered the former an adaptation. Here are extracts.

"Few novels of his century have taken on the weight of modern myth, but William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* is one of them, a tortuous masterpiece about the Bundren family's journey to bury their mother.

"In the hands of an uncertain talent, any reworking of this narrative — and particularly a contemporary, British reworking — would be folly, an invitation to bathos; but Graham Swift's new novel, *Last Orders*, is a triumphant and ultimately redemptive, adaptation of Faulkner's classic. It, too, is the tale of a

journey to a burial, and in its telling Swift has taken up Faulkner's device of alternating named monologues.

The novel is punctuated with more specific debts to its predecessor, both in form and in detail:



Messud: "Swift's novel a triumphant adaptation"

and yet *Last Orders* is not mere pastiche. A resonant work of art in its own right, it confirms its author as one of his generation's finest, with an imagination of rare immediacy and vitality.

"As in *As I Lay Dying*, the funeral trip teases to the surface the roiling resentments and agonies of years; but Swift, in *Last Orders*, allows for reconciliation, and even for hope. And while Faulkner's talent was to write himself into each of his characters, to insert improbable, magnificent passages of articulation into the minds of his creations, Swift has chosen to efface his writerliness almost entirely from this book: there is a deceptive simplicity in the novel's diction, a captivating authenticity in the voices it projects."

## Top guns fight for world title

BY HARVEY ELLIOTT  
AIR CORRESPONDENT

FIGHTER pilots from the world's air forces are to compete in a series of virtual reality dogfights to discover who is the real "top gun". Watched by up to 170,000 spectators, their every twist and turn will be displayed on giant screens as they try to evade attack.

The competition will take place during the Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in July. It is expected

least ten countries including Britain and some from Europe, the former Soviet bloc and North America.

The event, sponsored by the Swiss watchmakers Breitling, will take place over three days of heats, semi-finals and finals, and spectators will be encouraged to cheer on their own favourite. Each pilot will wear a virtual reality helmet linked to a computer and simulator which will display different and challenging cloud formations and ground conditions. The simulator has

based on the key components of all the world's leading fighter aircraft.

Clive Elliott, of the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, which hopes to receive up to £500,000 from the event, said that it would have been unfair to have one particular aircraft on the simulator. Pilots will have to learn how to handle a "generic" jet for the contest.

The winner, who will have seen off challengers in at least 20 aerial shoot-outs, will be given a challenge cup and the title of Champion Fighter Pilot

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Inventor says reversed keyboard is easy: 'Within a day I was reading Mozart backwards'

## Musician designs piano for players left in the lurch

BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A PIANIST is designing a piano for left-handed musicians. Christopher Seed hopes to build an instrument in which everything, including the keyboard, is reversed to allow a left-handed pianist's stronger hand to play melodies scored for the right hand.

The left hand, so often relegated to the accompanying chords and subservient to the melody being played by the right hand, would come into its own with the instrument. Mr Seed plans a complete mirror-image of an early 19th-century fortepiano: the highest notes will begin on the left and the lowest ones will be found on the right. The pedals will be reversed and, if playing with an orchestra, the soloist will be facing the other side, to ensure that his left hand and the lid are facing the right way.

### Nature defied by those who force someone's hand

BY DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

GEORGE VI, admired for his bravery and steadfastness, might in some cultures not have been allowed to accede to the throne and could even have been put down in childhood, like a deformed puppy.

This is because he was left-handed, which in certain parts of the world has been considered a mark of the Devil. The word sinister is derived from the Latin for left. Even in some contemporary cultures, a person who shows a preference to use the left hand as the principal hand is considered abnormal and even evil.

Ten per cent of healthy people have an inclination to use their left hand or are equally agile with both. Before puberty it is possible to teach many left-handed children to be right-handed. In doing so, however, the teacher is defying nature because there are differences in the brain of right and left-handed people. The speech centre is in the right hemisphere in the brain of left-handed people, rather than in the left as with the right-handed, and the balance of the distribution of

the large nerve tracks within the brain is correspondingly different.

It is widely assumed that attempting to teach a naturally left-handed child to be right-handed could so upset the delicate balance of the central nervous system that thereafter they could display complex psychological problems or trouble with the routine control of facial muscles or the movements of limbs.

If George VI did stammer because there was a futile attempt to rid him of his left-handedness, it was probably because of the pressure rather than physical changes in his neurological anatomy. The pressure might also have accounted for the famed sudden but short-lived, bursts of regal temper. George VI was excellent at playing tennis. A well-known tennis player whose tantrums amused the Centre Court for years was John McEnroe, who is also left-handed.

Statistically the left-handed are fractionally more likely to be good athletes and good mathematicians. They are, however, more likely to suffer from epilepsy and congenital heart disease.

There is evidence that left-handedness is inherited and the genetic defect which causes the epilepsy or heart disease may also influence left-handedness.

The greatest British expert on research into handedness died a few years ago at a comparatively young age, illustrating another disadvantage of being left-handed: there is a statistical tendency, no more than that, for left-handed people to die younger than the right-handed.



McEnroe excelled with his left hand

### Businesses overtake universities on research

BY NIGEL HAWKES

SOME companies are publishing more academic papers than a medium-sized university, a study has shown.

ICI published more than 4,600 papers from 1981 to 1994, while SmithKline Beecham, Wellcome and AEA Technology each published more than 2,000. A third of British universities published fewer than 2,000 papers in the same period, according to the study by the Science Policy Research Unit at Sussex University.

The report, *The Changing Shape of British Industrial Research*, was compiled by Diana Hicks and J. Sylvan Katz using data from scientific journals. They conclude that industrial research is contributing substantively to the science base and has shown itself to be "dynamic, diverse and adaptive". Drug and chemical companies produce the most papers, with biotechnology firms gaining prominence.

The report says that the quality of the papers published by industry is generally high, measured by the number of times they are cited by other researchers.

### FM licence for station that itched to get on air

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

A COMMUNITY radio station operated by volunteers in a disused cobbler's workshop has become the smallest broadcaster to receive a commercial radio licence.

Lochbroom FM, which two years ago launched an information service on the movements of midge swarms, is based in Ullapool, Highland. It had temporary broadcasting licences which enabled it to go on air for a few weeks only, but has now won an eight-year franchise from the Radio Authority.

Kenneth MacDonald, an accountant who helped to set up the station, said: "Lochbroom FM has made a real difference to the community. It has become a talking point in the village and in the pubs."

The station hopes to raise the £50,000 a year it needs to survive from advertising and sponsorship from tradesmen and businesses. It was recently awarded a £45,000 National Lottery grant which will enable it to build a headquarters to replace the tin shack it rented from a cobbler.



Christopher Seed at an ordinary piano. His design for left-handers is based on a mirror-image of the fortepiano

his design could also be useful for right-handed players who wanted to strengthen their left hand. Peter Dickinson, professor of music at Goldsmiths college, University of London, said the idea was "revolutionary". He said music was generally "written with the right hand dominant", apart from ragtime and certain kinds of jazz.

Stanley Sadie, editor of *The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, said assessing which composers and performers had been left-handed was difficult: many may have suppressed their natural preference because being left-handed was long considered sinister. But C.P.E. Bach was a likely candidate, judging by an oblique reference by his father, J.S. Bach, to his son

stein, the Austrian pianist who lost his right arm in the First World War and was the brother of the philosopher.

Ravel, however, was so disgusted by the pianist's alterations that he asked him never

to perform the concerto again.

Although Mr Seed has located

someone who could design the piano, Poletti & Tuinman Fortepiano makers of Holland, he needs to raise £28,000, and is seeking a

sponsor. Initially, he is focusing on recreating a 19th-century fortepiano, partly

because it is cheaper than a

modern piano.

Leading article, page 21

## Children keep mum in seeking sex advice

BY A STAFF REPORTER

PARENTS are still the main source of information about sex for most children, according to a study published yesterday. They were responsible for the sex education of almost half of girls and about a third of boys.

The study of 9 to 12-year-olds by the Schools Health Education Unit at Exeter University found that between 12.1 per cent and 18.3 per cent learnt most about sex from teachers. About two thirds said parents should be the main source and a fifth teachers.

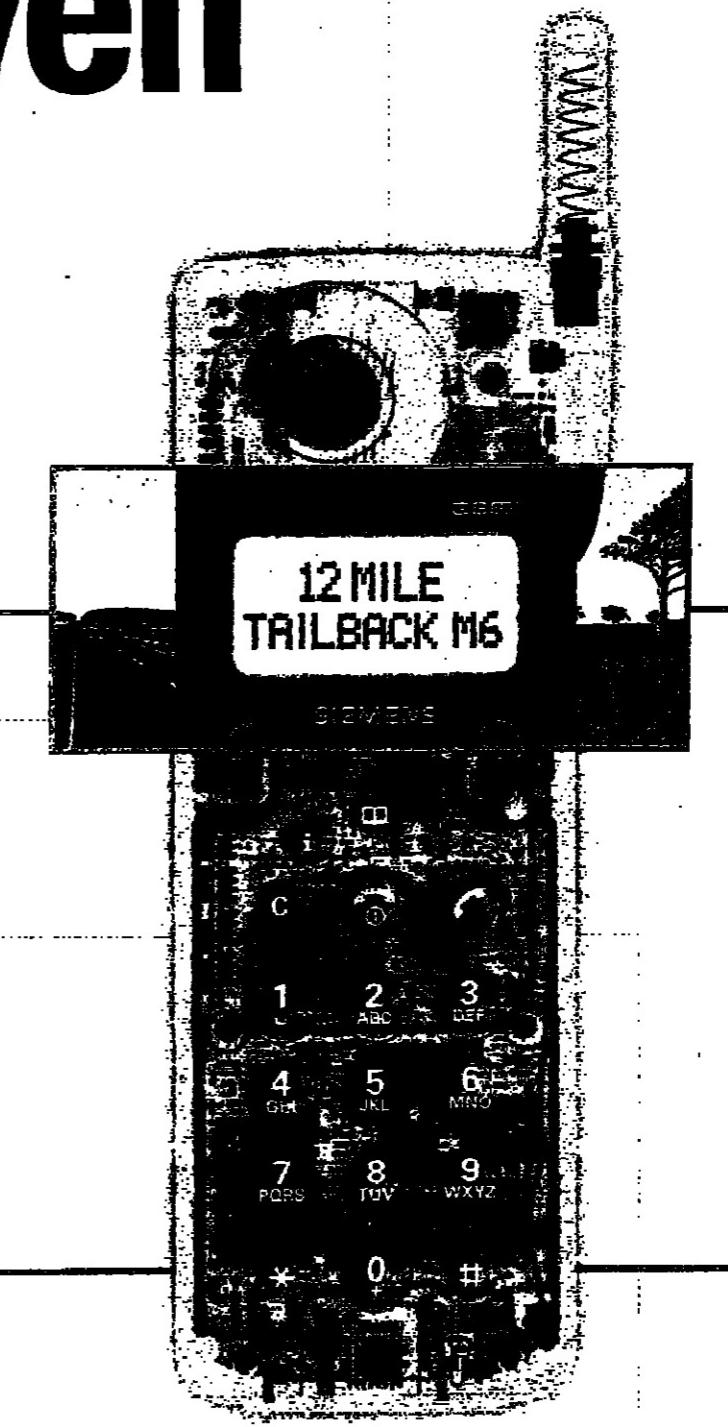
About 40 per cent of children in the younger age groups had talked to their parents about the threat of AIDS. One in four 11 and 12-year-olds had tried smoking and 3 per cent actually smoked. But more than four out of five said they would never take up the habit.

About a quarter of the boys and 15 per cent of the girls questioned claimed to have drunk alcohol during the previous week. More than half had discussed illegal drugs with their parents.

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# BALLOT

## THE TIMES GUIDE TO ELECTION ISSUES

### 8. Scotland

# Home rule battle will focus the voters' minds

**IN THE** forthcoming election, like the wars that brought Britain into being, the sharpest fighting between the Government and its opponents will be in Scotland.

The apparent convergence of Labour and the Tories on the centre ground in economics, welfare and crime has been accompanied by a far more confrontational stance on the constitution. Labour and its Liberal Democrat allies argue that a Scottish assembly marks the modernisation of Britain, and the most effective bulwark against separatist demands. The Tories maintain that setting up a parliament in Edinburgh would see an acid eat away at the Union. The Scottish nationalists, with a handful of MPs but twice the Tories' standing in the polls, breathe down the other parties' necks and argue

that only independence in Europe can provide Scotland with the freedom that Sir William Wallace fought for and the larger Union on which prosperity depends.

# Ashdown defends his deal with Labour

By POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

PADDY Ashdown defended the Liberal Democrats' deal with Labour on constitutional reform yesterday after claims from some activists that it could cost his party votes.

Mr Ashdown told delegates to the Liberal Democrats' spring conference in Cardiff: "We have been able to work and agree with the Labour Party in this one crucial area — despite our different values, our different policies and our different beliefs. Now that may be criticised by some, but it will be a great source of hope for millions in Britain who despair of politicians ever working together for the good of the country." Last week a joint Labour-Liberal Democrat document was published setting out plans for Scottish and Welsh assemblies, a Bill of Rights and reform of the House of Lords.

The prospective parliamentary candidate for Ceredigion and Pembroke North, Dai Davies, who said he did not want the Liberal Democrats to work "hand in hand" with Labour, was later said to have been "carpeted" by his party leader. Mr Ashdown's insistence that the deal with Labour was a positive achievement was

"Our party now carries the torch of conscience and reform. We carry the torch of radicalism in our defence of individual liberties and progressive social policies," Mr Ashdown declared.

He said that the £2 billion which the Liberal Democrats would raise through putting up on the basic rate of income tax would provide a primary school with 250 pupils with an extra £16,000 for books, computers and equipment, and a secondary school with 1,000 pupils with an additional £110,000. There would be 35,000 new jobs in pre-school education as a result of the party's commitment to provide a nursery place for every child from the age of three.

Mr Ashdown said that the Liberal Democrats were the only party promising to increase income taxes on the highest earners — bringing the rate to 50 per cent for those on £100,000 a year or more, to take the lowest earners out of the income tax system.

William Rees-Mogg, page 20

Ashdown addressing delegates yesterday

## Action man happy to be grandfather

By POLLY NEWTON

THE leader of the Liberal Democrats professed himself "absolutely delighted" yesterday at the prospect of becoming a grandfather, dismissing claims that he feared it would dent his action-man image.

The baby, the first for his daughter, Kate, who lives in France, is due next month. A newspaper report suggested that Mr Ashdown, 56, was keen to keep the event a secret because it would emphasise the fact that he is the oldest of the three main party leaders.

Mr Ashdown's wife, Jane, said yesterday that the suggestion was nonsense and had caused "a lot of hurt". Mrs Ashdown, who has just visited Kate, will go to France after the birth although the baby is expected in the middle of the election campaign.

Mr Ashdown said yester-

## Spies go on line to brief ministers

By MICHAEL EVANS

INTELLIGENCE scoops by British spies are now flashed to special computer terminals around Whitehall.

The security and intelligence services have been linked to government departments by an encrypted electronic messaging system. The development is partly in response to the criticisms levelled at Whitehall and the intelligence agencies by Sir Richard Scott in his report on the arms-to-Iraq inquiry.

Sir Richard detailed shortcomings in how intelligence material was circulated to the appropriate ministries. The software for the UK Intelligence Messaging Network was designed in Britain and has been installed with the use of fibre optics.

The three security and intelligence agencies — MI6, MI5 and GCHQ, the government communications centre at Cheltenham in Gloucestershire — have been linked to the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign Office and the Department of Trade and Industry.

## Computer chips and the social potatoes

By TIM JONES

COMPUTER addicts are being recognised with a new status placing them somewhere between motivated and muscular — but only in a dictionary. The Oxford University Press is to define them in its next edition under the name 'mouse potatoes'.

The people who sit for hours surfing the global network rather than enjoying a social life will be defined as being seen by many as "having a twilight existence, cut off from reality". Some are also defined by an addition to 'cyberspace' on e-mail.

The new Oxford English Dictionary will include scores of computer-speak phrases which are edging their way into common usage. Internet users are "netizens" and "cybernauts". There is also "kibos", the web slang for God. Helen McManners, an OUP spokeswoman, said: "Couch potatoes are a new breed joining yuppies, bimbos, toyboys and others who have earned a place in the English language."

Vicar who defied call to resign preaches on 'wounds'

By RUTH GLEDHILL  
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND'S first black woman team vicar, the Rev Eve Pitts, preached on with spirit and determination yesterday, one week after her diocesan bishop issued an open letter explaining why he had asked her to resign.

In a service on the Feast of the Transfiguration, she referred to the "wounds" suffered by all present, and told her congregation: "When things are down and you feel as if you want to give up, put yourself in Jesus' place, and say, 'Here I am, do with me what you will'."

Life was not always a straight path, she continued in her sermon delivered in a dilapidated community centre on the Druid's Heath estate, Birmingham, a mile down the road from the 13th-century church of St Nicolas, where she ran the 9.15am family service for two years.

"Sometimes we have to go down into the valleys. This



Eve Pitts preaching to 30 people in a community centre yesterday. "God will heal our wounds," she said

morning, the suffering Messiah reminds us that on the road to suffering. He also received glory. May I reassure you that the glory of God can be in all your hearts. This morning, that suffering Messiah can walk the streets of Druid's Heath."

Maureen and Ray Harvey,

whose son Lee was killed in a roadside attack, and whose funeral was taken by Mrs Pitts, were among the 30 worshippers at the service shorn of trappings. The Harveys have collected 600 signatures on a petition in support of Mrs Pitts, who was to have taken the wedding

service for their son in June. Mr Harvey said: "She has given us support beyond her pastoral duties. She is the kind of person who gives the Church credibility." Mrs Pitts has remained silent about what lies behind the pastoral breakdown between her and the Rev Martin Leigh, the rector of King's Norton team ministry. Mrs Pitts was asked by the Bishop of Birmingham, to resign after she stood up during a communion service at St Nicolas and accused Mr Leigh of using her "as a doormat". She has so far refused to resign.

Doctor with Aids virus faces GMC hearing

By ADRIAN LEE

ALMOST 6,000 women have contacted helplines since it emerged that a gynaecologist who worked at five hospitals was infected with the Aids virus. Patrick Ngosi, born in Zambia, will face a General Medical Council disciplinary hearing in London today.

He must answer claims that he infected a woman, with whom he allegedly had an affair, with the Aids virus and failed to undergo tests when he knew he was probably HIV positive. By late yesterday afternoon 5,684 calls had been made to two helplines.

Although most accepted they were at little risk, some callers were said to be distraught and offered counselling. Almost 50 women have already undergone Aids tests in the Southend area.

It is understood that the infected woman has subsequently withdrawn her complaint, made several months ago. But the GMC will want to know why the doctor, a married man who worked in obstetrics and gynaecology, did not have a test sooner.

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**Parish fights Church's sale of bog**

# Future of village greens rests on ruling by Lords

By JAN MURRAY

COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

A THIRD of an acre of boggy land in the heart of a hamlet mentioned in the Domesday Book has become a battlefield where the legal definition of the English village green will be decided.

The argument, which is destined to go to the House of Lords for settlement, pits the parish council of Sunningwell in Oxfordshire, backed by the Countryside Commission, against the trustees of the Diocese of Oxford, seconded by the Church Commissioners. At issue is whether the Church can sell off its property for housing development or whether it has been used as common land for so long that it has become a village green by default.

The Right Rev Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, is caught in the middle, with parishioners accusing him of being more interested in money than the welfare of the people. Avis Mulhearn, chairwoman of the parish council, has boycotted the village church in protest at the proposed sale and has drafted in the backing of the Countryside Commission to help to argue the case before the courts.

The commission, which normally stays out of legal arguments, has decided to join the fight because it considers that this is a test case that can sort



out once and for all what constitutes a village green.

The field became the property of the village church, St Leonard's in 1812, when it was obtained by the rector in exchange for glebe land further away from the church. He argued that the Church should not be required to place its money in the most profitable investments but the court ruled that the overriding obligation was to make money.

Development on a registered village green is illegal, so the parish tried to persuade Oxford County Council to designate it as one. Having failed, the parish has applied for a judicial review in the High Court. Whatever the ruling, the issue is seen as so important that it will bypass the Court of Appeal and move straight to the Lords.

Under the 1965 Commons Registration Act, any private land that had been used as a green for 20 years qualified as a village green provided that it was unfenced and was not used secretly even though the owner had not given express permission for the public to go there. That definition has been muddied by later High Court rulings which say that those using the land need to believe they have the right to do so because they live in the area.

Paul Johnson, the Countryside Commission's legal expert on village greens, said: "That interpretation does not seem to achieve what Parliament meant and we will have to ask the Lords."

The Rev Tom Gibbons, the rector of St Leonard's, said: "We ought to be looking at what is the aim of our Church: to preach the Gospel or to make money."

Government to find land for housing, gave planning consent and immediately the value of the ground shot up from a few hundred pounds to about £100,000. The council, however, now backs the parish and has contributed £2,500 to its legal costs. "Under trust rules the diocese has a responsibility to make the most of the income that can be derived from a glebe," Richard Thomas, the Oxford diocesan spokesman, said.

The legal duty was underlined in 1991 when the bishop lost a case in the High Court against the Church Commissioners. He argued that the Church should not be required to place its money in the most profitable investments but the court ruled that the overriding obligation was to make money.

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The Middle Temple hall. The practice of students eating dinners at their Inn goes back to the 13th century

## Inns of Court scrap medieval dinners rule for Bar students

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Bar tradition dating from medieval times whereby student barristers have to "eat dinners" at their Inn of Court to qualify at the Bar is to be scrapped.

Students on the one-year Bar vocational course will no longer have to eat 18 formal dinners in the hall of their Inn during term times, wearing their gowns and complying with various customs and rituals as they have done since the 13th century.

The move, to be brought in this October, constitutes a return to the Inns' traditional role in providing education for student barristers — the first formal Inns' teaching, apart from some recent advocacy courses, since 1600. Proposals will go before the Council of the Inns of Court this week from all four Inns — Middle and Inner Temple, Gray's and Lincoln's — enabling students to choose from various activities at their Inn, including residential weekends, one-day lecture programmes or lecture

evenings combined with buffet suppers.

Formal dining in hall will still be on offer, but eating dinners will no longer be required for students to notch up the necessary qualifying units in order to keep terms.

Lord Justice Staughton, a Court of Appeal judge and treasurer of the Inner Temple, said: "It is not so much abolishing a tradition as bringing a great tradition up

to date, which needed to be done." Brigadier Peter Little, sub-treasurer of the Inner Temple, said: "In a sense, we are returning to the original idea of what keeping terms meant and making it an essential part of the education of a barrister."

When students do still dine in hall, the dinners will be combined with activities such as lectures or debates, he added. The traditional idea of the

dinners is that students absorb the ethos of the Bar and mingle with their contemporaries and with the benchers of the Inns — the QCs and judges who are its governors.

The Inns had been urged to review the system because, from next autumn, several institutions outside London will be providing the Bar vocational course. Students outside London would have had to travel hundreds of miles.

Martin Bowley, QC, a bencher of the Inner Temple who has led the call for reform, welcomed the proposals. He had argued that if students had to travel to the dinners, it would "result in the social basis for recruiting Bar students becoming narrower, and it is already too restricted".

The report from the Inns to their governing body, the council, is likely to be approved and then to go to the Bar Council. The Bar Council said it supported the changes.

Law report, page 40

### NEWS IN BRIEF

## Mrs Scargill arrested in mine protest

Anne Scargill, wife of the president of the National Union of Mineworkers, was arrested and released twice yesterday morning, without charge, while protesting against open-cast mining near the home of Richard Budge, the owner of the RJB mining company.

Mrs Scargill, 52, was among several demonstrators arrested at Wiseton, Nottinghamshire. After she was released, she said: "I don't know why they arrested me. They shoved me in the bus and said it was for breach of the peace."

### Bishops hit home

Bishops join street sellers of *The Big Issue* today. The Bishop of Guildford, the Right Rev John Gladwin, said: "This draws attention to the need for political parties to take homelessness more seriously."

### Comet relief

The comet Hale-Bopp will be more noticeable in the evenings over the next fortnight, peaking by the end of the month. It is already visible as a smudge of light in the northwest sky before dawn.

### Global conquest

The global audience for the BBC World Service has grown to 143 million listeners a week, up three million on last year. The main increases came from re-broadcasts in Poland, and in French for Africa.

### Pond accident

The daughter of the writer and broadcaster Muriel Gray was critically ill in hospital after falling into a garden pond in Bearsden, Glasgow. Two-year-old Rowan Barbour is described as critical but stable.

### Too many cooks

Benefit fraud investigators who went to a restaurant in Nottingham found the chefs had fled, leaving pans bubbling over on the cookers. The campaign against dole fraud has saved £640,000.

### Clarke tops poll

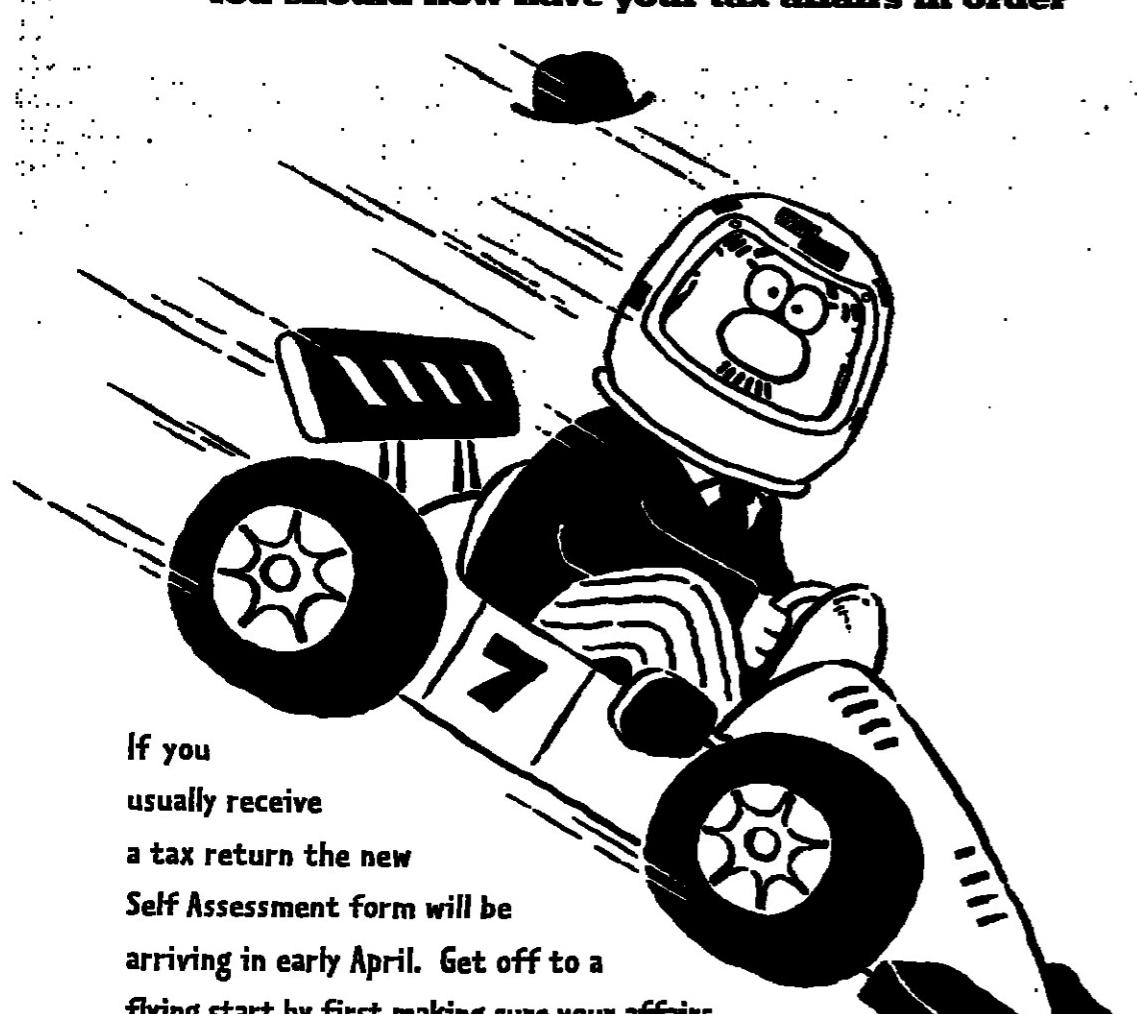
A survey of about 100 MPs chose Kenneth Clarke as the most impressive parliamentarian this winter. This is the first time a Tory has been selected since 1993 — when the top man was also Mr Clarke.

Farmers by South anti-evi

Sick Zaire the healing Kabilo's

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NEWS IN BRIEF  
Mrs Scargill arrested in mine protest

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Global conquest

Pond accident

Too many cooks

Market tops

THE TIMES MONDAY MARCH 10 1997

OVERSEAS NEWS 9

## Farmers outraged by South African anti-eviction Bill

FROM R.W. JOHNSON IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa's mainly white farmers are up in arms against the introduction by the ANC-led Government of a new Bill aimed at making it extremely difficult — and in some cases impossible — to evict black workers living on their farms.

The Government has been shocked by the fury of the farmers' opposition to the measure and has hurriedly suspended advertisements publicising the workers' new rights pending further negotiations.

The crisis over the Bill has highlighted the parlous state of relations between the Government and the farmers. During the liberation struggle farmers were seen as epitomising brutal white supremacy.

In part this was simply because farmers were the central historic figures of Afrikanerdom (in Afrikaans Boer means "farmer") but it was also because stories have

circulated for generations of farmers beating their African workers, sometimes even to death. Farmers' organisations do not deny that such atrocities took place but insist that such cases are now rare.

This cuts no ice at all with ANC organisations such as the National Land Committee, which wants to see the expropriation of white-owned land and argues that it is high time the Government realised it needs to treat white farmers with something closer to an iron fist.

Farmers, for their part, are close to despair at the continuing high rate of murderous attacks on farmers and their families, and in some parts of the country they have demanded the public hanging of such assailants. Most own a considerable armoury of guns and the farmers' organisations operate their own collective security networks known as Farmers' Watch.

Everywhere they complain

## Sick Zaire awaits the healing knife of Kabila's rebels

FROM SAM KILEY IN KINSHASA

MARCEL punched the buttons on the lift he operates in Zaire's Information Ministry and sighed. "I got paid yesterday in prostates. That's sick. You can't eat prostates," he muttered.

He meant the latest currency launched on the public, bills of more than 100,000 zaires which the entire population has boycotted and named after President Mobutu's cancerous gland.

What did Marcel think of the frantic diplomatic efforts in the United Nations and world capitals that have been launched to put an end to Zaire's civil war which leaders fear may

lead to the "disintegration" of Zaire's state and the destabilisation of the nine countries along its borders?

"Nothing," he replied. "What state? The prostate is symbolic of the myth that

Zaire is what you would call a state. It's not anything but a name for a country. The whole place is dying of cancer, its bones have gone." He has a point, and shares it with the vast majority of fellow Zaireans living in the capital, Kinshasa, where operations are conducted under cannibalised car headlights and teachers are paid in food.

Nobody, save the Zaireans, seems to have noticed that Zaire has quietly disintegrated economically and administratively. They want Laurent Kabila, the rebel leader, to march into the capital to put an end to Zaire's non-government. "Zaire has already disintegrated economically into

separate parts," said an economic expert at a Western embassy.

The diamond and gold-rich provinces of east and west Kasai boycotted the introduction of the "new zaire", which replaced a currency trading at six million to the dollar, in 1993. As a snub to the central Government the ancient notes are still the only "legal tender" in the provinces. The "prostitutes", which can be used to pay government taxes but for nothing else, trade at less than half their face value.

The economic chaos has been more than matched by Zaire's Monty Python approach to government. When

Zaire is only a name for a country. The whole place is dying of cancer?

Mr Kabila recently attended talks brokered by President Mandela of South Africa, his main worry was that he did not know who he was being asked to open negotiations with. "I do not know who I am supposed to talk to," he told diplomats in Johannesburg.

Mr Kabila is being asked to accept a ceasefire along his front in eastern Zaire where government forces unpaid and seldom resupplied, have abandoned vast tracts of land or strategic towns without firing a shot.

"I can see no reason why Kabila should stop fighting now. He will soon take Kisangani, and that could result in a change of government at the centre. Just what everyone wants to see," said a European diplomat. Marcel was more direct. "Bring us Kabila," he said.

## HUGH LAURIE

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MATTHEW DIGG / REUTER

## Drought threat in Kenya

A dead camel near a dry dam outside Wajir district in northeastern Kenya symbolises the loss of 30 to 50 per cent of the area's livestock, wiped out after three consecutive rainy seasons failed in 18 months. Livestock prices

are plunging, bringing financial ruin and sometimes death to nomadic Somali herders, whose economy relies on animals. December's short rains failed entirely, starving cattle, goats and camels. Cereal prices are rising, adding to food shortages. In Wajir, 300 miles

from Nairobi, 27.9 per cent of children aged under five were malnourished last October. "We have a situation which is serious and moving towards an emergency," according to Adam Leach of Oxfam. (Reuters)

## Beijing on alert after bus bombing

FROM JAMES PRINGLE  
IN BEIJING

EXTRA police were on duty yesterday at venues frequented by foreign tourists, after the official media admitted at the weekend that an explosion on a passenger bus in the busy Xidan shopping district on Friday was caused by a home-made bomb.

Anyone with any information about the explosion was asked to dial a hotline. A substantial reward was promised if any tip led to the arrest of the bomber or bombers. There was no indication of whom the authorities thought might be to blame, though police have told bus conductors to keep an eye on members of the Uighur community, an ethnic Turkic-speaking minority from northwest Xinjiang province who want more autonomy.

In Taipei last night Taiwan's state-funded Central News Agency reported that Xinjiang separatists based in Kazakhstan had claimed responsibility for the Beijing attack.

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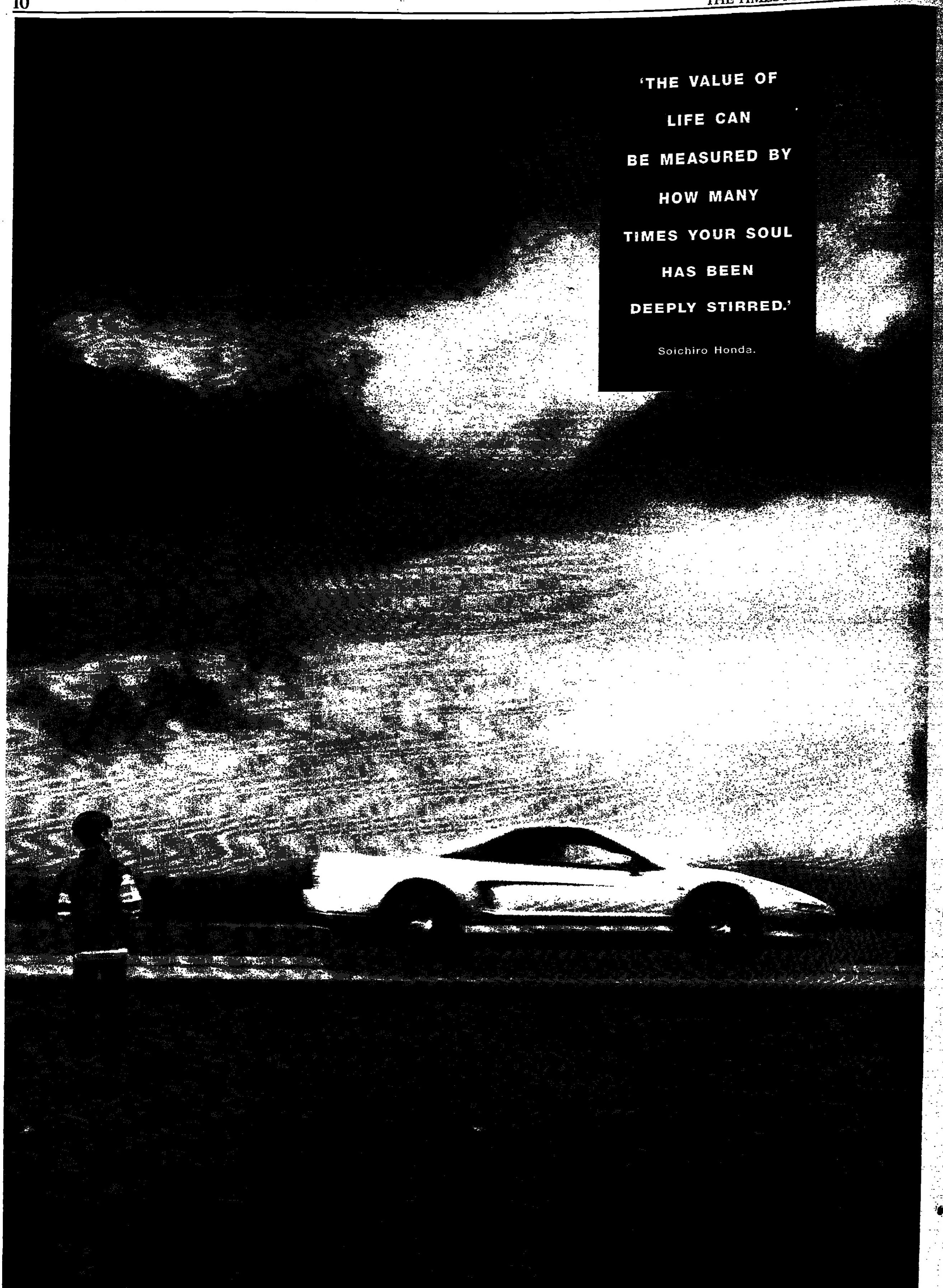


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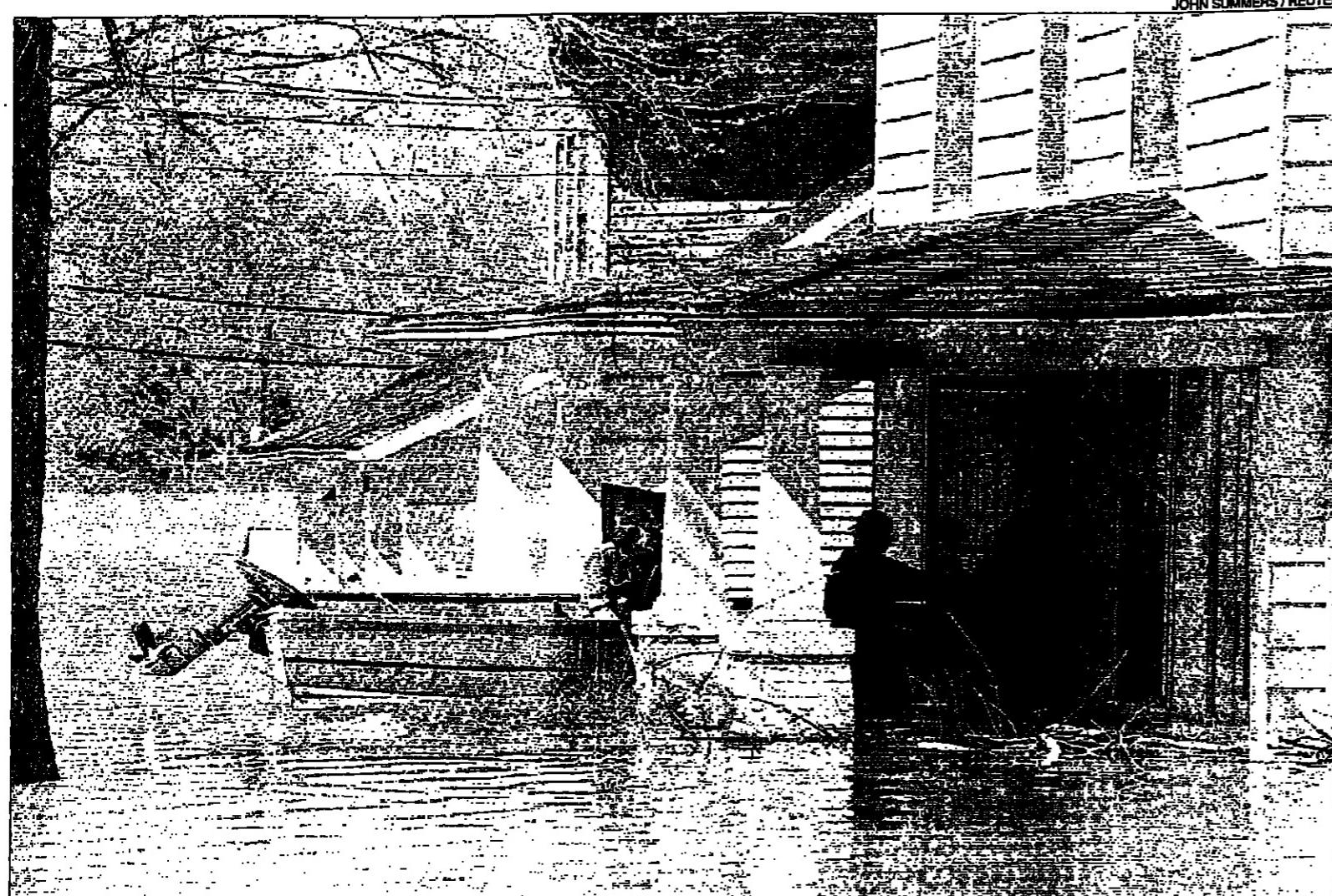
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Residents of Lebanon Junction, Kentucky, examine the damage caused by floods, which began to recede at the weekend. Tornadoes in Arkansas a week ago and flooding since then in West Virginia, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee have claimed at least 58 lives

## US politicians were alerted to Chinese funding

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE FBI warned six members of Congress last summer that the Chinese Government wanted to funnel illegal campaign contributions to them through companies and individuals in order to influence policy, it emerged yesterday. Dianne Feinstein, a Democratic Senator for California who sits on the Foreign Relations Committee, received the FBI briefing on June 14. She decided on Friday to return \$12,000 (£7,500) in campaign contributions from donors linked with the Lippo Group, an Indonesian conglomerate with investments in China, even though it remains unclear whether those payments were part of a Chinese government plan.

Yesterday's disclosures by *The Washington Post*, attributed to American government officials, come during a whirlwind of allegations about Democratic fundraising practices in the last election. It is

illegal for candidates to accept any foreign contributions, but suggestions that the Chinese Government sought to buy influence with cash have caused the greatest concern, coming at a strained point in US-Chinese relations, when many Americans fear that China will soon be an economic rival and military threat.

Government officials believe they have "specific and credible" information of Chinese plans to spend nearly \$2 million to influence congressional campaigns from the spring of 1995 onwards, and "conclusive evidence" that some reached America last year. According to yesterday's reports, the FBI warnings were delivered to members of Congress in individual classified briefings, which said: "We have reason to believe that the Government of China may try to make contributions to members of Congress through Asian donors."

However, officials are not clear whether the money reached campaigns, nor has the Justice Department found that any Congress member knowingly received illegal payments from China. The Chinese Embassy in Washington has denied allegations that it or the Beijing Government attempted to influence the American elections.

Leon Panetta, the former White House Chief of Staff, said yesterday that neither he nor the President knew of any FBI warning about Chinese attempts to contribute cash. He added that the Justice Department was right to investigate the matter "because clearly this kind of thing should not happen". The Justice Department task force was created last year to investigate the question of fundraising techniques, and has focused on the question of

foreign influence. The new details have emerged from the Justice investigation into the role of John Huang, a former Lippo Group executive appointed by Mr Clinton to the Commerce Department, who later became a top Democratic fundraiser.

Officials are also examining the role of Johnny Chung and Charles Yah Lin Trie, two other Taiwanese-Americans with a central role in the Clinton campaign's fundraising. The Democratic National Committee has now returned almost \$3 million of contributions raised by Mr Huang and others because the donors were not identified or were foreign.

Mr Panetta said yesterday that he could not explain why Mr. Huang had visited the White House 78 times during the campaign. Mr Chung 49 times and Mr. Trie more than 20 times. He added that the White House often issued thousands of invitations in a week, and while the Secret Service checked whether guests would pose a physical threat to the President, little care had been taken to probe their backgrounds.



Feinstein: returned \$12,000 contributions

## Pentagon papers reveal 'dirty war' in Latin America

TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

THE United States helped to organise a covert training programme throughout Latin America, at least until the early 1980s, that led to a string of kidnappings, torture and deaths.

Newly released papers by the Pentagon show that US Army training manuals, intended as instructional materials to help friendly governments fight Communist rebels, were instead used as handbooks for clandestine operations against domestic political opponents.

The manuals, known as Project X, taught foreign officers to offer a bounty for the capture or death of insurgents, spy on non-violent political opponents, kidnap family members of rebels and blackmail unwanted informants.

Last year the Pentagon disclosed that the training booklets were distributed at the US Army School of the Americas, the camp now at Fort Benning in Georgia which trains South and Central American military officers and has long been known as the school for dictators.

The new documents, however, prove that the original manuals, first written by counter-insurgency experts in 1965, gained a far wider circulation among US military personnel working in

Latin America. Project X is thought to have been discontinued in the early 1980s when the American-funded joint foreign intelligence assistance programme came to an end. But some of the manuals were used on an occasional basis until the Defence Intelligence Agency ordered they be withdrawn in 1991.

The Pentagon attempted yesterday to play down the significance of the latest papers, arguing that the number of "objectionable passages" were no more than two dozen in three training manuals out of 300.

The original documents were first written by experts at the US Army Intelligence School. They included lessons in creating "black, grey or white" lists of potential enemies.

Guidelines were given on aerial surveillance, electronic eavesdropping, interrogation, censorship and counter-sabotage measures. The most damaging passages advised the abduction of family members and the "prioritisation" of opponents for "abduction, exile, physical beatings and execution".

Even infiltration and suppression of democratic political groups was recommended, including political parties, unions, religious and student groups.

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Some of the record 12,574 competitors in the 26-mile Engadin cross-country ski marathon, from Maloja to St Moritz and Zuoz in southeast Switzerland, cross Sils Lake yesterday

**WORLD  
NEWS**
**RAF crew  
in fraud  
inquiry**

**London:** RAF flight crew involved in Nato operations over Bosnia have been questioned by military police in an inquiry into alleged fraudulent expenses claims [Michael Evans writes].

It is believed that up to 50 pilots and navigators, serving in Gois del Colle, Italy, are involved. The expenses were for hotel stays during briefings at other bases. The inquiry could lead to courts martial.

**Netanyahu  
faces revolt**

**Jerusalem:** Binyamin Netanyahu was fighting to hold his ruling coalition together after nine months as Prime Minister [Christopher Walker writes]. At least eight right-wing deputies plan to vote against the Government in a no-confidence motion, alleging Mr Netanyahu has willingly given up part of the Biblical land of Israel.

**Pit protests  
hit tax talks**

**Bonn:** The fate of cross-party talks on German tax reforms was in the balance yesterday after opposition Social Democrats pulled out in sympathy with miners protesting at government plans to slash coal subsidies.

Protests swept Germany's mining regions and tempers ran high as miners took to the streets. (Reuter)

**Cadets held  
after killings**

**Moscow:** Two students at a Russian military college who fled with arms and ammunition after one of them shot dead five fellow cadets and an instructor yesterday surrendered to police and troops.

The two cadets, aged about 18, were tracked down after the incident at the Kamyshin Military College, north of Volgograd. (Reuter)

**Pioneer of  
H-bomb dies**

**Los Alamos:** Carson Mark, a Manhattan Project scientist who led the team of physicists that developed the hydrogen bomb, has died aged 83 from complications after a fall, a daughter said. He joined the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos in May 1945 and stayed after the war to head the theoretical division which developed the H-bomb. (AP)

**Ivory ban**

**Abidjan:** The Ivory Coast is to ban the ivory trade so as to protect the elephant. A new decree regulates ivory import and export and orders nationwide collection and itemising of ivory products. (AFP)

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# Bonn expels US envoy for hi-tech espionage

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE German authorities have expelled an American diplomat for trying to obtain high-tech economic secrets, in the first such spy case since the Second World War. *Der Spiegel* news magazine, in its issue to be published today, claims that the expulsion was handled quietly and the diplomat was withdrawn rather than declared persona non grata.

The move reflects the new assertiveness of the German domestic intelligence service and a growing impatience in Bonn with American espionage activity. The Central Intelligence Agency and other US federal agencies have large stations in Germany.

In part this is a legacy of the Cold War, since much of the espionage work against the Soviet Union was carried out in the press. Three German spies were detained initially on the suspicion that they were illegally selling secrets to Britain. These charges were dropped, but an internal investigation nonetheless showed that the agents had tried to profit financially from a shared intelligence-gathering operation mounted by Germany and Britain.

The background to the case was one of infighting in the BND, the German external intelligence service. The BND-based outside Munich is nowadays a far quieter place. The American expulsion is believed to have been generated entirely by the Cologne-based Federal Agency for the Protection of the Constitution, the German equivalent of MI5.

According to *Der Spiegel*, the expelled diplomat was caught trying to recruit senior



Chirac bids farewell to the Gaullist heritage

## Chirac to shed his de Gaulle image

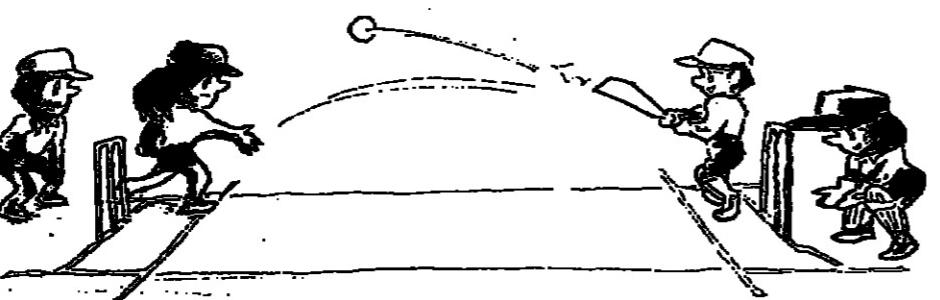
BY ADAM SAGE

PRESIDENT CHIRAC will put aside his elevated Gaullist conception of the French presidency tonight in an attempt to show that he is capable of tackling France's daily economic difficulties.

The strategy will be made clear when M Chirac intervenes in a television programme about youth unemployment. The President has decided to move away from the style that marked the beginning of his seven-year term as he sought to echo his mentor, General Charles de Gaulle.

He will abandon his role as "he who reveals the truth", according to his aide. In his "modern conception" of the presidency, "he does not act on behalf of people, he encourages those who act", the aide said.

The new formula is a reaction to the widespread anger that greeted his initial attempts to reaffirm his Gaullist heritage as a head of state who defended France's interests abroad and set the broad outline of policy.



A cartoon from a Hong Kong Cricket Association brochure aimed at children

## Hong Kong cricket crusaders prepare for lengthy innings

FROM CATHERINE FIELD IN HONG KONG

THE image of a Chinese wielding a cricket bat may seem as unusual as a Geordie at the mahjong table, but some determined people in Hong Kong are trying to change that.

The colony's first cricket club was founded in 1851, ten years after the Union Jack was hoisted over the Fragrant Harbour. The sport survived two world wars, the Cultural Revolution and the shift in the mid-1970s of the Hong Kong Cricket Club's pitch from the business district of Victoria to a slope overlooking Happy Valley racecourse.

But it was always a sport for whites, and wealthy whites at that. For the excluded Chinese, cricket seemed a bizarre act of occasional exercise, glimpsed from the top of a passing train.

Now, in the dying months of British rule, cricketing stalwarts are fighting to preserve their sport for the time when China takes over Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Cricket Association is energetically

promoting the sport in schools, seeking with some success to have it named a "core sport", a status ranking it equal in terms of resources and education time to the other big games, such as table tennis and badminton.

"There are now cricket courses in more than 50 schools, and in our cricket centres we have 450 children, about 100 of whom are Chinese," Russell Mawhinney, a former New Zealand first-class player and senior member of the association, said.

Aware of Hong Kong's lack of open spaces and flat land, the crusaders are promoting "diamond cricket". Batsmen, each with a blue plastic wicket, are placed at the four points of a diamond, and a bowler deployed in the middle. He bowls to each batsman in turn; when the ball — of orange plastic — is hit, the batsman is obliged to run to the next wicket. Fielders are placed in and around the diamond, which can be as small as half a tennis court.

Thirty-three Hong Kong coaches requested international accreditation in 1995, rising to 70 last year. Teams from the colony play against Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand and its players have gone to the Australian Cricket Academy and Lord's Summer Cricket School.

## French 'anglophile' brands Britain as class-ridden failure

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

THE AUTHOR of a French textbook which condemns Britain as an economic and social failure yesterday described herself as an "anglophile". Isabelle Ayasch's comments summed up the ambivalent attitude of many French towards a neighbour they find fascinating, perplexing and irritating.

In recent days there has been a lengthy television programme on Franco-British relations, envious media coverage of Britain's millennium celebrations and the spotlight turned on Mlle Ayasch's textbook for students.

Mlle Ayasch, 29, a fluent English speaker who was at Oxford University between 1988 and 1990, paints Britain as a country handicapped both by its historic failure to overcome class divisions and by Thatcherism.

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future, because Britain is so divided on the social front that it is prevented from moving forward economically."

It goes on to explain how welfare cuts have prompted "wealthy people, with feelings of snobbish guilt, social conscience or a strong dose of condescension ... to contribute to the work of charitable organisations".

Although Mlle Ayasch said she was "an academic, not a politician", her views are shared by much of the French establishment. Jacques Attali, a close associate of the late President Mitterrand, said in a recent interview: "Britain is on the way to becoming an underdeveloped country."

However, hostility towards Britain runs alongside a strong current of sympathy. Mlle Ayasch, for example, said: "I visit Britain every six weeks and I have friends all over the country, in London, Northampton, Wales and the North of England."

She said many of her criticisms of Britain could also be directed at France.

## Brussels pushed to settle conflict on eastern front

The town of Apeldoorn will hardly enter history alongside Versailles or Yalta, but the map of future Europe could be shaped a little by a gathering of statesmen in the drab Dutch dorp later this week.

The occasion is one of the twice-yearly "informal" sessions of European Union foreign ministers. For once the 15 are to eschew domestic preoccupations, such as their wrangle over the imminent "Maastricht II" treaty. They are to do something rare think big.

Under pressure from the calendar, Albania's crisis and Turkish threats, the 15 are to thrash out their most daunting challenge how to manage a transition that, over the next few years, will see the prosperous West shift its frontier eastward by hundreds of miles.

The ministers are to break a taboo by dropping the pretence that expanding Nato and the EU are items for separate discussion, handled by different bureaucracies, albeit both based in Brussels. The spur is a double deadline which commits the EU to starting accession talks with at least some of the ten former Communist candidates and Cyprus by the end of the year and Nato's drive to invite new members in July.

Current wisdom says the first batch of newcomers to both clubs will be the same three states — Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic — with the possibility of outsiders such as Slovenia and Romania. New Nato members are expected within two years, while entry to the EU is unlikely before 2002.

The EU, which includes 11 of Nato's 16 members, has been resisting attempts by Washington to co-ordinate the two enlargements. The US wants the EU to soothe the Baltic states with a promise of EU membership when they are excluded from Nato.

Washington is worried that the EU is distracted by its employment crisis and obsession with monetary



union and wants it to speed up its eastward move. Privately, many European officials do not share America's enthusiasm for Nato enlargement and fear that the welcome mat for a chosen few could force the unlucky candidates back into the zone of antagonised Russia.

Turkey, a staunch Nato member, has now forced the Nato-EU link, by threatening to veto the alliance's expansion unless it gains entry to the Union.

Meeting at Christian Democratic forum, Helmut Kohl, the German Chancellor, and other leaders decreed that there could be no question of Turkish EU membership. Hans van Mierlo, the Dutch Foreign Minister, stirred Turkish ire last month by saying it was time to be honest and accept that the EU had no room for a big and poor Muslim country.

This does not please London and Washington. Both are alarmed at the consequences of keeping out Turkey, which has been knocking at the EU door since the start of the Common Market in 1957.

With America determined to wash its hands of Bosnia by the end of the year, the EU faces a challenge in ensuring a stable Balkans. Even more urgent, the EU's credibility is at stake in Albania, where failure to stop a civil war would be seen as another EU debacle and ill omen for its struggle to take responsibility for its own continent.

CHARLES BREMNER

Malcolm Rifkind, page 20

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Starting today: an essential guide for every parent by *The Times* education experts on  
**Who will be top of the class?**

This week *The Times* will be publishing comprehensive league tables of the best — and the worst — of our primary schools. Today we examine the background to a revolution in education

**T**he boycotts have passed, the court case is over, now we see what all the fuss was about. Tomorrow the first primary school league tables for England will be published.

After more than five years of planning by ministers and civil servants, matched by stern resistance from the teaching profession, parents will finally have some objective information on primary schools. Rudimentary though the comparisons will be, they will provide shocks for some previously satisfied customers as they see what neighbouring schools are achieving.

Stand by for a welter of objections as the results highlight a select group of schools getting all their pupils to the level expected of an 11-year-old, while others register alarmingly few successes. Last week, even before the results were published, two unions had picked them to pieces.

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers found fault with the marking, the phrasology of questions and the whole approach of the tests. Head teachers concentrated their fire on the way the tables are compiled. But parents, who have had to make their choice of school solely on impressions and local reputation, will have little sympathy. Perfection may take a little longer, but they will settle for this for now.

All this week, *The Times* will be examining the process of choosing a primary school, one of the key decisions any parent has to make. As well as ranking all the schools that submitted a full set of results, the series will offer pointers to identifying the best state primary and preparatory schools. We will also look at nurseries and give a flavour of the tests themselves.

Many in the education world were determined that the tables should never be published because they believe that the wide variations in schools' intakes render the results misleading. More than 1,000 governing bodies refused to submit their teachers' assessments of their pupils, and the National Association of Head Teachers sponsored a High Court challenge to the way the tables are compiled. In the end, however, fewer than 100

will be missing, many for reasons beyond their control.

Tomorrow, no doubt, some schools will have reason to challenge their results. But hard cases make bad law. The exercise marks a milestone in the Government's information revolution with this first incursion into primary education.

Just as the secondary school tables exposed the realities of parental choice, the primary equivalent will foster new aspirations for the younger age group. Most children in England go to their nearest primary school but, until

for at least a year and then, within a fortnight and under considerable political pressure, announced the opposite. But the change of heart appears to have paid dividends: both English and mathematics showed significant improvements last summer.

Yet are primary schools really improving as a result of the tests and the tables, or are they merely getting better at preparing their pupils for assessment? Other new tests and examinations, such as GCSE and the assessments of seven-year-olds, have shown similar rises as teachers have got used to them.

Nick Tate, the chief executive of the quango responsible for the tests, is unrepentant. "People can say schools are just teaching to the tests, but if we are testing the right things, that is what we want them to do," he says. "We are convinced that the exercise is raising standards."

One improved set of results does not mean that all is well in primary schools, however. Some 40 per cent of 11-year-olds are still failing to reach their expected level before moving on to secondary school, and the Office for Standards in Education still considers this age group the least well taught.

The lesson surely is that the tests and the publication of results must remain and improve if standards are to rise further. They focus schools on the basic skills their pupils need to flourish in secondary education.

In the past year, many primary schools have introduced revision classes for the first time in decades and set about polishing up techniques that were once second nature to their pupils. There has even been a knock-on effect in schools looking again at streaming — until recently anathema in the primary sector.

Such changes would never have come about without the stimulus of testing and the publication of results. There will be shortcomings in tomorrow's tables, but they are nothing compared with the consequences of going back to the bad old days of primary education.

JOHN O'LEARY

now, their parents had little information about the alternatives. At the very least they will now be armed with some pertinent questions.

The tables would not have been published this year had it not been for a disastrous set of results in 1995. Fewer than half of all 11-year-olds reached the level expected of their age group in English and mathematics. The science results were better, but so far out of kilter with the other subjects that standards had to be readjusted for 1996.

Successive reports by school inspectors have identified the seven to 11 age group as the weak link in the national curriculum. In trying to cope with a wide range of subjects, primary schools often let slip the vital building blocks of education: English and mathematics.

Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, infuriated teachers with a blatant U-turn in which she ruled out league tables



Alert, and eager to learn... children of primary school age have no preconceptions of what is "boring" or "difficult"

## Conkers, maypoles, and all

### BETWEEN THE AGES OF FIVE AND 11, I ATTENDED A CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL WHICH HAD NO INDOOR SANITATION, NO SPECIAL LEARNING AIDS (UNLESS YOU COUNT A BLACKBOARD) AND A FIRM BELIEF IN THE BENEFICIAL DISCIPLINARY EFFECTS OF A GYM-SHOE ENERGETICALLY APPLIED TO THE BACK OF THE LEGS. WHEN THE MOMENT CAME TO CHOOSE A SCHOOL FOR MY FIVE-YEAR-OLD SON, I NATURALLY WANTED HIM TO HAVE THE SAME ADVANTAGES.

A colleague once accused me

of having been brought up in

the 19th century — and when I

consider my early education, I

can see that he might have had

a point. My primary school,

originally a 19th-century dame

### THE MOTHER'S STORY

SCHOOL, WAS HOUSED IN A VICTORIAN Gothic building and had overflowed at some point into a couple of prefabricated huts. The facilities were scarcely more sophisticated than they can be today.

The lavatories, much frequented by enormous spiders, were situated in a charming little rustic outhouse in the middle of the playground. Our school milk came in crates of 1/3-pint bottles which, frozen in winter, would be placed to thaw out by the oil-fired stove.

Our games — skipping, bowing hoops, conkers, marbles —

own childhood (hard to come by, in any case, in southeast London) but the rigour, the unwillingness to put up with anything less than excellence of Mrs Turner, and her staff. Whoever set John Stuart Mill to learning Greek at three-and-a-half had the right idea. Children of primary age are perfect raw learning material.

They lack preconceptions of what is "boring", what "difficult". They will learn a French word — or a classical Greek one — as readily as an English one; a poem by Byron as gladly as one by Kit Wright.

They find work as interesting as play, and have no need to be tricked or jolted into learning. This is not a frame of mind

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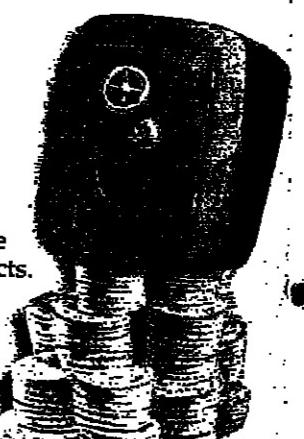
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what to look out for — and what to avoid — when choosing a primary school for your child



You have studied the figures, talked to the teachers — but there is no substitute for a visit to a school such as this, where the children are happy and highly motivated

## Now, make your choice

**T**omorrow's league tables will give parents more information on a wider range of schools than they have ever had before. But the national curriculum test results are just one factor in choosing a primary school.

The starting point must be a realistic assessment of what is feasible for the family. A school on the other side of town may look an attractive proposition, but lengthy daily journeys there and back may soon test your resolve. After-school activities will be more complicated, and the child may find it more difficult to build up a circle of friends.

Even if you are restricting your choice to the state sector, there may be different types of school to choose from. Do not wait until your child is approaching school age before looking ahead. Some primary schools have nurseries, for example; while many others take four-year-olds into reception classes.

### WHERE TO FIND THE INFORMATION — AND HOW TO USE IT

Some parents like "all-through" primaries, which educate children from the age of five until their transfer to secondary school. Children do not have to adapt to a new school at seven, as they do where there are separate infants and junior schools. Others prefer the cosier atmosphere of an infants' school.

Once you have narrowed down the group of schools from which the choice is to be made, there are three main sources of information to explore. From tomorrow, one will be the league tables. A fuller set of statistics than those published in national newspapers will be available in local libraries and can be ordered from the Department for Education and Employment.

The school's annual report is another valuable guide. How readable the document is will depend on

the governors who produce it, but there are now several important pieces of information it must contain. Some, such as the annual accounts, may be of marginal interest to prospective parents, but there will be up-to-date test results and information on where the previous summer's leavers went.

**A**lthough the tests taken at 11 are the ultimate benchmark of primary education, if the child is just starting school, those taken at seven are of more immediate concern. There are no league tables for this age group, but annual reports contain a detailed breakdown.

The destinations of leavers often say as much about a school as its national curriculum results, especially in areas which still have grammar

schools or a high proportion of independent schools. If you pursue an interest in the school, ask about previous leavers to ensure that the year covered by the report is representative.

The third and most detailed documentary evidence is in Ofsted reports, which are available on the Internet as well as from schools themselves. About half of all primary schools have been inspected, and 6,000 more will be added this year. Reports concentrate on the "core subjects", but look at every aspect of school life in the space of about 30 pages.

In the end, however, there is no substitute for visiting a school. You will see immediately the size of classes, the standard of the facilities and the behaviour of the children. Inexperienced parents may learn

little about academic standards from a brief trip around the classrooms, but they will acquire a lasting impression of the staff, their surroundings and those intangible features which make up the atmosphere. Look for displays on the walls as an indication of enthusiasm from teachers and pupils; see how children mix in the playground.

Above all, talk to the head teacher,

who sets the tone for any school. There will be (or should be) policies on everything from homework to sex education and discipline, but the personal touch is all-important. Recent research by Anne West, of the London School of Economics, found that the top priority for parents in choosing a school was that their child should be happy. Discipline, atmosphere and the quality of education all rated highly, but could not compare in importance.

JOHN O'LEARY

## and the wisdom of Mrs Turner

that lasts for very long, however.

Having survived a second-year education of almost unrelied mediocrity (and got into university in spite of it), I am living proof of the estimable benefits of a really excellent primary education. Mrs Turner's children emerged

from her care imprinted down to the marrow of their bones with the rules of English grammar, the multiplication tables and the Authorised Version. By the age of 11 we had also learnt about the deep satisfaction of a piece of work well done; how to withstand intense boredom; that life is

not fair, and that a newborn fieldmouse was the exact size and colour of the shrimp-lacquered talon on the forefinger of our nature teacher.

I set about finding all this for my son without much hope. I thought my chances of matching my ideals with a state school that would be prepared to offer him a place were roughly nil. We embarked upon a grueling round of interviews at prep schools, ranging from the dauntingly good to one establishment that made Dotheboys Hall seem like paradise. My son, who has views of his own, got himself rejected by all these by the devastatingly effective technique of lying on the floor moaning "No, No".

We had also applied to two local Church of England primary schools, both, coinciden-

tally, housed in the sort of pointed Victorian Gothic with which I was so familiar. Was that the reason my heart rose? Perhaps, or perhaps it was the quantities of evidently well-thumbed books, or even the small, chastened child doing detention at one of them.

**W**hatever it was, I knew I'd found what I was looking for. Letters were written by priests: an offer made, and accepted with alacrity. On my son's first day, I felt a surge of exhilaration. This was the first step on a long and exciting journey. Whether it leads, in the end, to All Souls or Engine Driver School (my son's current plan), I felt he was setting out from the right place.

JANE SHILLING

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## Striking the right balance

### THE CLASSROOM DEBATE

PRIMARY teaching methods have been at the centre of educational debate for several years now. On the face of it, this is surprising. When health or social services hit the headlines, it is rarely a matter of methodology, yet in education, debates about whole class teaching, grouping of pupils, how to teach reading and even homework, make the front page. This may be because we all have direct experience of primary education as pupils or parents. These controversies are fuelled by the stream of inspection and test data which flows through the system as a result of the present Government's reforms. While the nature of the evidence is the subject of heated argument, at least now it is there to contest.

In relation to primary teaching methodology, it is now possible to identify what might be called the Ofsted line. Broadly, this is that there should be more direct teaching of the whole class, much greater emphasis on systematic phonics and much higher expectations of what children should achieve.

Evidence from abroad broadly supports the Ofsted case. David Reynolds' report, *Worlds Apart*, showed the importance of whole class teaching in the educational progress made, for example, in Taiwan. This is

hardly surprising. Common sense would suggest that actively teaching is likely to have more impact than waiting for learning to occur. However, at least in public debate, some of the complexities of the issue rarely surface. Effective whole class teaching demands a fast pace, lots of interaction between the teacher and pupils and a range of effective visual displays. Teachers have also to strike a careful balance of whole class, group and individual work, depending on the task in hand. The shift that Ofsted has urged is likely to result in a better balance.

On the teaching of reading, the Ofsted line is again broadly confirmed by international evidence. But the fact that we know what works in primary school teaching, and that many schools are not doing it, reveals the education system's failure to disseminate best practice.

Ofsted's contribution has been to highlight the issues as it sees them. However, there is more to be done than bidding it be done. Teachers have found themselves criticised, yet the system has not done nearly enough to enable them to change what they do.

**MICHAEL BARBER**  
• The author is Dean of New Initiatives at London University Institute of Education.

### NATIONAL RESULTS

Tests at 11 are marked on a six-point scale equating to levels of the national curriculum. Most children fall into one of the categories below, of which 3 is the standard expected of a nine-year-old, 4 the expectation for an 11-year-old and 5 the level normally reached by the age of 13.

Level	3	4	5
English 1995	39%	41%	7%
Maths 1995	30%	45%	12%
1996	37%	32%	12%
1997	34%	40%	15%
Science 1995	19%	45%	22%
1996	28%	48%	14%

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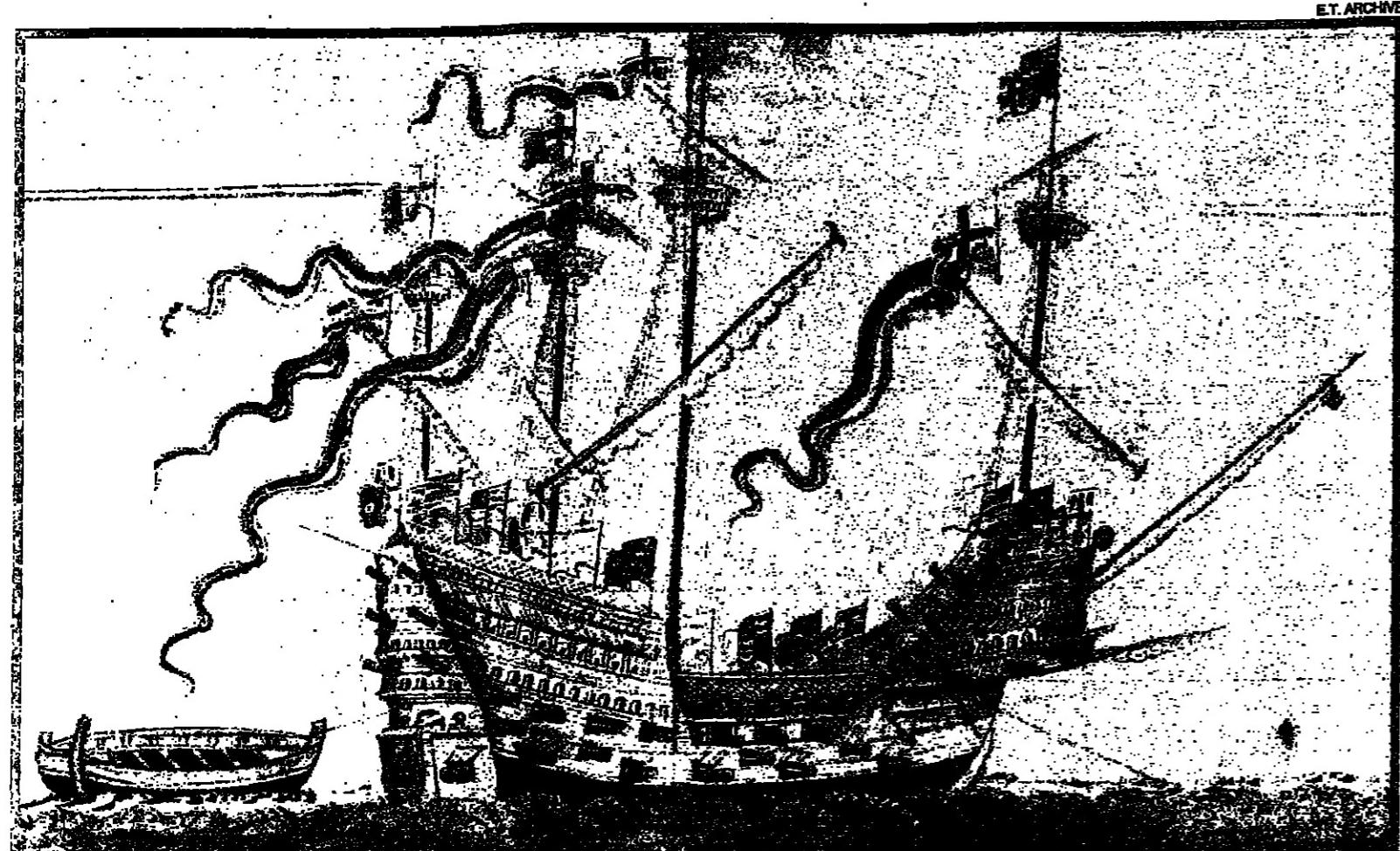
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The only surviving picture of the *Mary Rose*. Hopes that the Alderney wreck might prove an even older English warship seem to be unfounded

## Lost and founded

"I have yet hard [heard] no thyng but that we [two] packets sent from your lordship since my coming over are lost in a shipp that was cast away about Alderney..."  
Sir John Norreys to Lord Burghley, November 29, 1592.

**A**lderney, the most northerly of the Channel Islands, has been described as a ships' graveyard. The remains of 100 vessels are said to lie off the island, where the weather can change with treacherous swiftness. The inhospitable conditions mean the waters keep their secrets well. Five years ago Dave Randall, an amateur diver, decided to explore a wreck lying half a mile off the northeast coast. He brought up a Dutch dung, dating from late 16th century. It was the first in a long line of astonishing finds including cannons, muskets, helmets, breastplates, leather shoes and English weights.

There were even barrels of buckshot made abroad. It quickly transpired that this was no ordinary shipwreck. A

breathtaking possibility arose — could it be the first Elizabethan warship ever discovered? Last year the States of Alderney, the island council, decided to call in the experts. It engaged the help of Michael Bowyer, the director of the marine archaeology unit at the University of Wales in Bangor. The quest to identify the ship was filmed by the BBC; Dr John Nolan, a military historian, who commissioned it.

The missing ship must have been English. Yet the wreck did not obviously point to this. The helmets were Spanish, the shoes Portuguese and the weights, although English, would have been compulsory for any country's merchant ships that hoped to trade with England.

Next, the archaeologists turned to naval records of warships. Suspicion soon fell on the *Makeshife*. She was built at Limehouse in London, one of two ships commissioned by the Navy for £300. She had elegant proportions — a length of 50 feet and a breadth of 14 feet. But Owain Roberts, an authority on ancient shipbuilding, deduced that the wreck had slightly tubbier proportions, measuring 50 by 20 feet. She was not a warship but possibly a cargo ship.

But what about the arms? "If the ship is the one referred to in the 1592 letter from Norreys, which is 80 per cent likely, it would have been a

dangerous time to be at sea," Mr Bowyer says. "We now think it was a heavily armed merchant ship."

Consolation came with studies of the rudder timber by dendrochronologists, who use tree rings to date wood samples. Each species of tree has a distinctive pattern of ring-widths, which are logged on a database covering every year from 3,000 BC.

Jennifer Hillam and Cathy Groves, from Sheffield University, were able to deduce that the rudder was cut in 1575 from oak forests in southeast England, so it could easily have belonged to the supply ship that Norreys was expecting.

The identity of the wrecked ship remains, for now, unknown. Royston Raymond from the Alderney Maritime Trust, which is trying to raise money for further research, is convinced that eventually "something will turn up". But for now, the adventure is over and the waters have kept their secret well.

• Horizon: Shipwreck, Thursday, BBC2, 9.25pm.

Anjana Ahuja on the mystery of an ancient wreck

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Rabbit control □ Energy source □ Hepatitis B

## Sterility vaccine

IN AUSTRALIA nobody has a good word to say about rabbits. Poisoning, trapping, shooting and bulldozing their warrens are too good for them; biological warfare has been declared. Not only have the authorities set loose a deadly virus, which is killing rabbits by the tens of millions, but they have a further trick up their sleeves.

The plan is to release a virus attached to a synthetic vaccine able to sterilise any rabbit that catches it. Viral-vectored immunocontraception, as this ingenious pest-control technique is called, could also be used against cats, foxes and house

mice, three other species that get no welcome in the Outback. Admittedly, there might be some problems with cat owners whose priceless pets suddenly turned out to be sterile, but the scientists are confident they can deal with that. Some owners might even welcome it, they claim.

At present the sterilisation drive is on the back-burner because of the huge success of rabbit calicivirus, a deadly disease that was being tested on an island off the coast of South Australia in 1995 when it escaped, reached the mainland, and started killing rabbits. David Lord, a sheep farmer, told *New Scientist* that he felt "incredibly lucky and privileged" to own one of the farms that the virus reached first. Before it arrived, he said, his 66,000 hectares had 25,000 warrens, each containing up to 50 rabbits. They were eating 125 tons of grass a day.

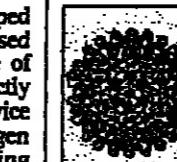
Not everybody thinks that releasing a lethal virus into the wild is a good idea. Rabbit calicivirus mutates with remarkable speed, and may also be able to hop species, possibly hitching a ride on a migratory bird and ending up somewhere else. Australian

scientists charged with getting rid of introduced species have little sympathy with this attitude. They point out that the rabbits, cats and foxes are a dire threat to many native species: 57 Australian mammals are endangered, and 20 are under threat, says a document from the Vertebrate Biocentre, an office of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Australia's national research body.

It is the biocentre that has devised the sterilisation plan. For rabbits, it would use a myxoma virus carrying the genes from the sperm, or the egg. When this infected rabbit, they would develop an immune response against the proteins and mount an attack on them. Instead of breeding like rabbits, the rabbits would not breed at all. The vaccines should work with "laser-like precision", the centre says, because the targeted proteins will be exclusive to the pest species.

Foxes would be tackled using a modified salmonella bacterium, and mice by a virus called ectomelia; or possibly mouse cytomgalovirus. Cats have been given a lower priority, and no disease vector is yet identified. The biocentre is relaxed about the danger of these modified viruses escaping and infecting endangered species of rabbit, fox, or even the big cats of Asia. Not very likely, say the Australian pest specialists: myxomatosis never even reached New Zealand, 2,000 kilometres away. They concede, however, that special attention would have to be given to potential escape routes, which would include control over the international trade in pedigree cats and rabbits.

## Frozen path to the heart of a virus



A NEW fuel cell developed in California has raised hopes of a clean source of electricity provided directly from methanol. The device works by taking hydrogen from the methanol, passing it through a membrane and combining it with oxygen to produce water and electricity. The principle is old, but the details of the new device — a catalyst which enables the cell to run on a mixture of ethanol and water, and a new membrane which prevents methanol getting through — have greatly improved performance.

The developers, from the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the University of Southern California, believe that they can create a device the size of a thick paperback, able to produce 50 watts while consuming about a pint of methanol a day. Eventually the hope is to produce devices big and powerful enough to power cars.

A NEW technique has enabled Medical Research Council scientists to reveal the structure of the protein at the core of the hepatitis B virus. As well as being a great technical achievement, finding the structure may help in treating hepatitis B and finding vaccines against other diseases.

Normally materials need to be crystallised to work out their structure, but the new technique uses an electron microscope to study samples of the protein frozen in a water-based solution. Computers combined images of more than 6,000 protein particles to build up a three-dimensional model, published in *Nature*.

"Over 300 million people worldwide are thought to be hepatitis B carriers, so the more we know about this virus, the better," says Dr Tony Crowther, one of the MRC scientists involved.

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# Mr Angry counts his blessings



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**B**en Elton is 37, greying just perceptibly, and married. Last week he hosted the Brit Awards without a hitch — and without a single gobby remark-in-your-face piece of body language.

He was subdued, restrained, did not want to intrude on what was an evening for the viewers at home. He wishes the BBC had run it live, there was so little that needed cutting.

If he was a little po-faced during Mrs Merton's joke about cocaine, well, this was because he nearly missed it. When she said "Everyone backstage is looking for Charlie", he thought it surreal, only catching on when she repeated: "Charlie, Charlie." "It's not a phrase I hear all the time," he says. "I go to the Groucho Club about once a year. And I don't see this kind of thing going on there," he adds.

Elton is a pub man. Indeed, when we meet at the London Welsh Centre, where his play *Popcorn* is being rehearsed before its West End run, his get-up is that of any "bloke-in-a-pub" since 1980 — tight red T-shirt, checked blouson jacket, jeans.

His love of a beer was one reason he accepted the Brits job. He had a night off on tour: "So I was in the vibe. And nights off on a tour are a bit strange. You tend to get drunk..."

To offset this disaster, he now exercises. "I made a decision in my early 30s because I love to drink, particularly beer. If I don't drink one night, it'll be a decision."

Rumours of a personal trainer are untrue, he insists, although he did go to the gym three years ago. "I used to play squash with Ade Edmondson (Viv in *The Young Ones*, married to Jennifer Saunders), but he lives in Richmond now..." Ah, Richmond. And Elton lives in Primrose Hill, another leafy, although scarcely trendy, part of London. It is the classic diary of a thirtysomething.

Whatever happened to the "smug git in a shiny suit" who swore about Thatcher on *Saturday Live*? Well, he certainly isn't here in the rehearsal room, posing for the photographer with his feet just hanging off the sofa. "Well, I mean, if I saw a picture of a bloke with his feet on the sofa, I'd think what a git, wouldn't you? Even on trains I put a newspaper on the seat before I put my feet up."

What a wonderful vision — the man who defined the tone of Eighties humour, papering train seats. But then he always did have a well developed social conscience (some critics felt it to be self-righteously overdeveloped).

Born in Catford, but brought up near Guildford — his father, of Jewish extraction, was a professor at Surrey University — he read drama at Manchester University. There he met Rik Mayall, two years his senior. At 21 he became the BBC's youngest ever scriptwriter.

But in 1981 there was a six-month gap when he needed money, and he turned to doing stand-up at the Comedy Store. Suddenly the young man who had wanted

Ben Elton has moved from aggressively political comic to happily married man. Interview by Grace Bradberry

to write for *The Two Ronnies* became the archetypal Eighties stand-up. Not necessarily the best — Alexei Sayle described his act as "like a dog shaking hands" — but the most aggressively political.

During that decade he also co-wrote *The Young Ones*, followed by *Filthy Rich* and *Catlap*, and the second series onwards of *Blackadder*. Yet although these were his finest achievements, it was the stand-up, particularly as host of *Saturday Live*, that set his image as "Bolshie Ben".

The Nineties have seen him move into the mainstream — though even in the Eighties he stood in for *Wogan*. He has written four novels, three plays and a sitcom, *The Thin Blue Line*, which attracts audiences of more than 11 million

but at first caused critics to say he had gone soft. "There's nothing I can do about that. I'd had ten years of being told I was a bigoted, loud-mouthed, left-wing yobbo. Suddenly, it was where's his claws, where's his teeth? You can't win, so frankly, I'm the lot of them."

"I've never been any more or less angry than I am now, and I'm not remotely angry," he adds belligerently.

"I was a product of my times. People forget now, it's got so kind of... boring. I suppose, politics. Not that I would wish back to the confrontation of the Eighties." But one senses, from the way his face lights up with evangelical zeal, that perhaps he would. "When I did my first gig Britain was three months from mass rioting," he says. "I was on five television, on Channel 4. I had a mike, these were times, you know. The only comparable thing that still makes me jump is the amount of homelessness we accept."

Now that the workers have put away their scaffolding poles, and Thatcher is long gone, Elton has turned to other targets. They are more conservative than anyone expected. The subject of *Popcorn*, his bestselling novel turned play, is Hollywood violence. An hysterical tale of a film director who meets his nemesis — two young psychopaths who claim his work led to their crimes.

It is a rollickingly funny satire — but also an attack on cynicism, which Elton cannot abide. One tends to think of him as cool, but he denies that this has ever been the case: "I have no ability to look cool. I have always known that for what is considered cool, the main prerequisite is cynicism," he says. "I've always wanted to get involved."

And, he says, to be liked — "But I'm not

going to do something I disapprove of in order to be liked." Until the press homed in, it seems he always was liked. He certainly goes to a lot of trouble to make you like him — endless consideration and self-deprecation.

He even coined the word "farty" to characterise himself. "I've been bedevilled by it," he exclaims. "Sue Lawley asked me about it. I mean, I couldn't even say the word in front of Sue Lawley. It's like saying it in front of the Queen."

Even one of his most enduring contributions to the language, the word "girly", which originated in *The Young Ones*, was invented to avoid offence: "It wasn't pious like saying 'woman'; but it wasn't demeaning like saying 'girl'. It was so silly that it wasn't patronising."

The word has been taken over by the New Lads and Laddettes. Does he shudder at Channel 4's *Girly Show*? "I do, but I'm not going to diss other people's products in print. But you know what I feel about cynicism and trying to be fashionable for fashion's sake — a lack of content does bedevil a lot of British broadcasting."

Some would say so does swearing, of which Elton has been a prime exponent. He is trying to kick the habit: "As my Mum once told me, it's a useful exclamation mark — not that she'd ever use it — but a pretty poor comma. If you can save it up for that special moment on stage, then you can really get a comic effect."

**H**is audience, too, has grown up. "These days the people who come to my shows average about 30 — but there are loads with grey hair. What's funny is mates of mine come and say: 'Ben, there were loads of people with grey hair and bald patches.' And I say: 'Yeah, you.'

Since he married his long-term girlfriend, the Australian saxophonist Sophie Gare, in 1994, he spends more nights in. "I used to go out a lot more. I've got a couple of mates who live outside London and I might go and see them, which of course I don't do much any more. We are together, and your time is more taken up. I am happily married."

There are no little Eltons as yet. "We still feel it's something we'd very much like to think about. If the time comes and the circumstances are right..."

He has always talked a lot about how "lucky" he is, but now he seems to count his blessings more than ever. For example: "Any time I've ever felt some small, 'Oh why am I being described falsely', I think of what happened to Neil Kinnock and I realise how lucky I've been."

"Of course, he talked a bit too much, but these days, looking at soundbite politics, don't you long for someone who actually loves words?" Kinnock was a friend. He doesn't really know Tony Blair.

"The Labour Party has gone to the right of me. But I'm not a zealot. I've got a lot of time for some of the things Paddy says," Ben Elton? In sympathy with the Lib Dems? Where will it all end?

• *Popcorn* opens at the Apollo Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, London W1 on March 20

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## ARTS THE WEEK AHEAD



**MUSICAL**  
Maria Friedman takes the lead as the National Theatre stages Kurt Weill's *Lady in the Dark*. OPENS: Tomorrow REVIEW: Thursday



**VISUAL ART**  
At the National Gallery, 25 Monets drawn from London collections go on display together. OPENS: Wednesday PREVIEW: Tomorrow



**BOOKS**  
Not only, but also: the rise and fall of Dudley Moore is chronicled in a new biography. IN THE SHOPS: Now REVIEW: Saturday



**THEATRE**  
Felicity Kendal stars as the Peter Hall Company opens at the Old Vic with Granville Barker's *Waste*. OPENS: Thursday REVIEW: Saturday

The notion of a cave is both ancient and powerful. The caves of Lascaux; the caves of Plato; the caves of childhood made from blankets or in bushes; the cave in the rocks behind the fire, civilisation protected from and frightening off the wild with flames; the caves of a thousand Buddhas and of Aladdin; the cave that is the skull with the mouth as its opening; the Malabar caves in India which terrified E.M. Forster's Mrs Moore; the unconscious as a cave and the sexual cave which follows on from that. Is it no accident, as Marxist like to say, that the Latin for the deepest emotion we feel — alarm or fear — is *cave* — Beware?

And there is something primally secure about a cave. The image of cave ancestors, their fires never allowed to expire, warming and guarding and lighting their security, has dug in deep. Is it too easy to imagine them seated there, looking out into the dark, across that magical illumination which defined all that was gathered in the

## Deep in the cave, something was stirring

darkness to harm them? And there they must have talked, to turn the day into meaning through stories.

Perhaps there was always a simple musical instrument which made a sound which extended and exercised the senses and imagination before talk; or maybe those wall frescoes predated even speech (but I think it is unlikely). Stephen Pinker's study of language in *The Language Instinct* shows how rich language could be from its beginnings, and it would be an uncontroversial bet that from words came not only the first commands, but the basis for those parallel worlds — the fabricated, the invented, the fictions; the telling of what might be, the embellishment of what had been.

I was reminded of this at the Duke of York's Theatre in St Martin's Lane in London last Sunday. The fire was the lighting around the proscenium, making a

ble at the Royal Institution or hovering over an unstable lectern in a drafty hall, would claim that theirs is the most fundamental voice — the single bringer of news and surprise, the explainer of the unknown. Theatre people, without doubt, would claim the calm and the aficionado of mime would certainly be pushing to be head of the arts line.

But I think that the fire is the key, whether in front of the caves or even on the open plains of Africa, where humankind just scraped into its next stage. And sitting around the fire would bring out talk more than anything, and shared stories which would circulate as freely as the wood smoke.

Poetry readings today are the true heirs to all this. I am sure that lecturers, whether behind Faraday's magnificent kidney ta-



Seamus Heaney — and two actresses — Diana Rigg and Imogen Stubbs — read on the themes for about an hour and a half. Such a poetry reading is replicated throughout the British Isles many times over, night after night. We go out to seek a common cave and all those who have hunted and scavenged words and rhymes talk to us across the light.

During my adult lifetime poetry readings have gone from an occasional treat to a steady entertainment, with younger poets now routinely referring to them as "gigs", not unlike the gigs of rock groups or jazz bands. It is certainly the most direct way in which to receive a concentration of the imagination; and the two antique props — darkness and light — with the two essential ingredients — speakers and listeners — hold up well. A beautiful little West End

theatre box enters a time warp, and we sit before the glittering eyes.

This reading was to raise funds for the Arvon Foundation. Arvon was founded in 1968 by two poets, John Moat and John Fairfax, who wanted to establish a place outside universities for the practice and practical pursuit of writing. It is now established in three country retreats where, over the years, scores of established writers have taught and talked with hundreds of those who have been successful in applying for these courses.

My connection with Arvon has largely been through Ted Hughes, who has a passion that the widest possible public should read and write and memorise poetry from the earliest practicable age. Hughes, it seems to me, believes

that everyone born is capable of expression in a unique way, and must be encouraged to cultivate that ability. For not only will it enrich them, it will, in a direct way, he believes, enrich the world, add to its variety and splendour and make it altogether finer. In an understated but unyielding way our present Poet Laureate is a most tenacious evangelist. This carries over into his reading. I've often thought that if one were casting for the voice of God, then Ted Hughes would be the sole contender.

So he sat on the bare stage with the others, unrolling poems from *The School Bag*, the new collection he and Heaney have put together. Yeats, Larkin, Emily Brontë, Wilfred Owen, Keats, Frost, Auden, the Anon who wrote *Beowulf*, and many more floated across the flickering light now in a deep rhythmic pulse, now in a most natural speaking/singing chant, now in a dramatic vignette. We listened in the dark and soaked up the messages from this other world outside.

DANCE: Philippe Decoufle's dreamscape *Decodex* leaves Debra Craine bewildered, but thoroughly entertained

## Playtime at the human zoo

**Decodex**  
New Victoria,  
Woking

by the detailed construction of the human frame. But he also loves the poetry of human movement, the profound statement that is more than the sum of its bones and muscles.

*Decoder* is at its best in this mood, particularly in two notable scenes that make you wish it was you up on that stage. In the first, a woman is balanced in the middle of two parallel unicycles, rocking back and forth in a trance-like due with her non-wheeled male partner. In the other, a beautiful quartet, two women attached to bungee-jumping cords are paired with two earthbound men so that the women are continuously bouncing over the heads of their partners — a neat twist on the traditional pas de deux.

Sometimes *Decoder* is like staring at inmates in an exotic zoo: sometimes like looking down the eyepiece of a microscope; sometimes like wandering through rehearsals at the circus. There is no rhyme or reason to its excursion into fantasy, no cause to its effect. Then, quietly, it just fades away as the house lights call time on our reveries. The daydream may have made no sense, but it did pass the time most pleasantly.

The choreography is designed to heighten the illusion and elicit polite giggles, but there are also long passages of pure dance that test the strength and resilience of the dancers' bodies. Like a child dissecting a frog for a school project, Decoufle is fascinated

by the entries in an encyclopaedia whose only relationship is their alphabetical happenstance, the vignettes in *Decoder* are not necessarily connected. Rather they occur as random and self-contained creations, a picture-book of sight bites from an out-of-control daydreamer.

Decoufle sets out by toying with our perceptive assumptions. Which way up are the

dancers? Are they standing on their heads or on their feet? His company of ten performers quickly take on the characteristics of animals: they flip-flop like frogs, they crouch like reptiles, they hover tentuously, like insects.

Philippe Guillotin's costumes are a vital component in Decoufle's exploration of anatomical truths. Like the choreography, they help to conceal the body's natural form and heighten its quadrupedal antecedents. There are dragon's tails and frogmen with giant flippers; wiggly elongated antennae; and a three-headed creature with vacuum-cleaner arms.

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"There is no rhyme or reason to its excursion into fantasy, no cause to its effect"

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## Rebirth of little promise

To celebrate its return to life, Kent Opera might have shown enterprise and some anniversary spirit by performing Schubert's dramatic oratorio, *Lazarus*. By choosing to present *Orfeo* instead, the new artistic management doubtless hoped to revive memories of the company's pioneering Monteverdi shows. But nothing about the new production, which tours until next Friday, begins to suggest that the old company has been truly reborn. This was the second operatic version of the Orpheus legend to come to London in a week; the first was

Gluck's at ENO, and the third, Haydn's *Orfeo ed Euridice*, is due from the London Philharmonic soon. Of the three, Monteverdi's 1607 *favola in musica*, the first great opera, has the rawest music-dramatic power. It should stir the listener like nothing else, and if it doesn't work itself is not to blame.

Alas, this simple legend often inspires producers to an excess of artiness, and here Tim Carroll proves no exception. The slow-motion posturings on stage and the matching costumes obscure characterisation: any first-time visitor to this opera is likely to find it mystifying, even though Anne Ridder's English translation comes

across clearly. Carroll's big "idea" is to have the symbolic figure of Music, a Monteverdi ghost in cassock and ruff, on stage throughout, looming in the background and sometimes physically manipulating the action; duologues are reduced to nonsense.

Dramatic inertia was only underlined by John Toll's musical direction. His dirge-like tempos might have succeeded had they been underpinned with real musical tension, but there was none. Sensuous melodies and forceful recitative alike came across with the same unrelenting monotony. In the circumstances, the singers had probably given up trying to be interesting.

Few in the young cast sounded at home with Monteverdi style, but Rachel Wheatley was a sweet-toned Eurydice, and Clara Sanabras (Messenger), Juliet Schieemann (Hope), Esther King (Prosperina) and Martin Robson (Pluto) all suggested potential. Terrance Barber's stiff counter-tenor made him disappointing as Music. Gwendoline Thomas's Orfeo revealed a mellifluous, dark tenor, but it seemed all too natural that his unvarying singing should have lulled the boatman Charon to sleep.

JOHN ALLISON

## A loud and bumpy ride

LIKE it or loathe it — and few listeners find a middle way — Michael Nyman's sound-world is unique. The pulse is pumped out with steely virtuosity. The amplification is oppressive; the orchestration unrelentingly thick. Nuance, charm and wit are absent: the beat goes on, and literally has no time for such incidental delights.

Any expectation that his new Double Concerto for Saxophone and Cello would prove less robotic, just because Nyman cites Hiroshima as an inspiration, was swiftly dispelled. Commissioned by Mazda Cars, the work proved to be as tender as an advancing tank. In that its choppy formal suggested any overall "mood", it was the scurry of a surreal barn-dance, with frantic riffs piling up on an already overcrowded texture.

No subtle experience, then; and not a rewarding one, one imagines, for the cellist Julian Lloyd Webber. He could be seen digging his bow furiously into his strings, but rarely heard. The saxophonist John Harle fared better. And at least the opening was intriguing: saxophone and cello gnawing at the same notes, then gradually splintering away. After that briefly ingenuous prelude, however, it was heavy-duty business as usual.

Earlier, the quintessential Nyman work was played by his own band and the Philharmonia under James Judd. It is *MGV (Musique à Grande Vitesse)*: a noisy tribute to the TGV train. What do the French think of this "accolade"? To me it evokes the runaway steam engine from hell, not the smoothest, fastest ride in Europe.

Nyman chose two other

composers' pieces to complement his own, and they were fascinating. Ervin Schulhoff was a Jewish Czech composer who died in a Nazi concentration camp. His sardonic tone is akin to Shostakovich's, but his expression is far terser. The Symphony No 3, played here, was over in 20 minutes, yet its sense of tragic defiance, jagged edges and dislocated fury left an indelible impression. I would like to hear it played more precisely than the Phil-

RICHARD MORRISON

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At the Barbican Zubin Mehta conducts cello concertos with the LSO and Mstislav Rostropovich CONCERT: Thursday REVIEW: Saturday



## ■ FILM

The great British Oscar hope, *The English Patient*, is finally released in Britain OPENS: Friday REVIEW: Thursday



## ■ OPERA

John Tomlinson sings the role of Hans Sachs as Covent Garden revives *Die Meistersinger* OPENS: Saturday REVIEW: Monday



## ■ POP

James bring their big anthems to Newport at the outset of their British tour GIG: Sunday REVIEW: Next week

**ARTS**  
TUESDAY TO  
FRIDAY  
IN SECTION 2

THEATRE: Katie Mitchell's two-part mystery cycle for the RSC; and Maureen Lipman's one-woman West End show

# Biblical tales for a new generation

**G**od made man in his own image, but, if Katie Mitchell's production is to be believed, he made David Attenborough and David Bellamy more in his image than anyone else.

Looking like a tousled blend of both, David Ryall's obsessed boffin lolls on rough floorboards in his oatmeal smock, chortling with joy as he dreams up an offstage sun, moon, splashing water, earth, plants, chirruping birds and distantly honking whale. There is an anxious moment as he ponders his next move, but it passes. Prairie noises follow jungle sounds, and

temporarily convince God that his experiment in human zoology is worthwhile, only for Death and Justice to argue that the lab should be closed down. The answer is the Incarnation: movingly evoked when Paul Hilton's Jesus, helpless and naked, curls up on the lap of Josette Bushell-Mingo's radiant yet humble Mary.

As often with Mitchell's productions, a simple intensity rules. Her excellent 15-person cast do not pretend to be medieval workmen playing biblical figures, but wearing plain beige weave throughout give us the figures directly and with many humanising touches. Pregnant Eve shattered by the loss of Abel and Cain, Noah, clearly no DIY freak, flummoxed by the need to build a 300-cubit ark and troubled by the prospect of a drowned world. Terrified Isaac, clinging to the father who was about to kill him. Joseph, often the object of gentle fun in the miracle plays, coping first with an unsought marriage, then with an inexplicable pregnancy.

There are similar moments later: a weeping woman washing Christ's feet with her hair, Lazarus emerging from his stinking winding sheet, a cured madman spinning in incredulous glee. Yet I enjoyed *Passion* rather less than *Creation*, and not because of such PC touches as the promotion of the Magdalene to top disciple.

**H**ilton's... Jesus, though brimming with warmth and energy, is too larky in his assaults on hypocrisy and folly. One doesn't want grim Jesus or gentle Jesus meek and mild — but maybe we need a more formidable Jesus than this rangy prankster, with his fondness for standing on his head and doing cockerel invocations to poor Peter.

Nevertheless, the point is made. The "Oil of Mercy," much mentioned in *Creation*, does its job in *Passion*: Forgiveness, love, responsibility for others are preached as well, as a scripturally more dubious "making the inner outer and the male and female one". God's lab animals have a fresh opportunity to prove their value. The question of whether we have done so in the last 2,000 years is, however, not within the scope of even an ersatz mystery play.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Paul Hilton as Jesus is nailed to the cross in Katie Mitchell and Edward Kemp's wonderful, unsettling mix of the curious and the spurious

DONALD COOPER

"HELLO, hello, I'm back again," said Martin Fry to an eager Empire crowd. "Now I know how Gary Glitter felt." ABC, of which Fry is now the sole original member, may be of a more recent British pop vintage than that tinseled troubadour, but they were in a way the 1980s' extension of the glam dynasty, and if Fry had continued the comparison by asking "Did you miss me?" the answer would have been a deferring affirmative.

The fact that the first ABC show of the Nineties sold out weeks in advance was rather more about unabashed nostal-

## POP

**ABC**  
Empire, W1

gia than anticipation of their return to record stores, which starts today with the single *Stranger Things* to be followed later in the month by an album, *Skyscraping*. The original group's combination of showbiz sophistication, romantic symbolism and immortal melodies gave them sound-of-an-era status in 1982, when *The Lexicon of Love* luxuriated in the charts for a fortnight short of a year. Their last good year at the box office was 1990, when the retrospective *Absolutely* was a Top Ten item, but proof that ABC were already the stuff of memories came the following year when *Abracadabra* was given an exceedingly early bath.

On the evidence of this comeback, Fry's careful incubation of the brand name is an object lesson in tenacity that deserves to bring fresh success. Far from setting a course for the low-rank revival circuit, he gave the group's illustrious past a renewed buff and added new sparkle with a debonair display that belied his years of absence.

Gone was the gold lame of yesterday, replaced by sober shirt and jeans, but Fry's quiff still shimmered and so, too, did a veritable ABC of hits, from *Poison Arrow* and *All Of My Heart* through *Be Near Me* and *When Smokey Sings*, to a final, exultant *The Look of Love*. Of the new songs, *Stranger Things* sounded suspiciously like a hit, while *Only the Best Will Do* reeked of Roxy Music, indicative of a performer whose heart may be in the past but who hasn't finished with the future.

PAUL SEXTON

## Lady who lunches and tells jokes

Live & Kidding  
Duchess

**T**his is Maureen Lipman, alone on stage (with Michael Hesleam on the ivories) for just over two hours, singing three or four songs, performing a couple of sketches and stringing an uncountable number of jokes on an invisible thread. Three men standing at the gates of heaven, an Irish actor joke, doffing train jokes, a Terry Waite joke, many Jewish mother jokes. "And did you read about Chris Eubank...?"

Most of the time is hard to understand how one joke has prompted the next, but of course the thread that links them is not invisible at all but standing up there in a dog-rose and geranium outfit, chatting easily.

Smiling likeably. Likeability is not a word that describes her second outfit, however: even if it was inspired by Dior's New Look, or indeed is a reproduction of a dress once worn in 1947. The collar does not plunge; it plummets. It is a boomerang in white satin, attached to its owner by the two ends, and sometimes looks as if it has poised long enough in mid-flight and will take off over the stalls.

I hope it is not ungallant to mention such matters but my eyes kept

focusing upon it, and my role is to open to the experiences of an occasion.

For some years now Lipman has been a treasured speaker at lunches and brunches, so that audiences who have enjoyed her jokes there may well recognise them here. I remembered several myself, but this was because I arrived early enough to read the programme where anecdotes she would later tell are included in her autobiography essay. This is a bad idea, reducing to zero the sense that jolly secrets are being shared with us from the stage.

Hailing from Hull, the birthplace of Andrew Marvell, she has the bright

idea of reciting the poem to his coy mistress in the dialect of the city, with a football scarf flung over her shoulders and a beer glass in hand. Recalling childhood habits of speech probably can't be called mimicry, but getting inside other people's voices is an art she manages well. Her impression of "Lady 'Nutmeg'" Thatcher singing along with the Spice Girls passes all too swiftly.

Some bits of Joyce Grenfell, a clever Auctioneer song, several other pleasant bits and pieces and jokes that often made me smile. Fans will be happy.

JEREMY KINGSTON

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# Security for all of Europe

Nato enlargement is no threat to Russia, says Malcolm Rifkind

We still need Nato. Men of vision created it, and it has formed the bedrock of our security for five decades. It is our insurance policy against any serious threat to peace. Only Nato has the capacity to mount a challenging military operation, as Bosnia has shown. No single nation can respond to this sort of task: it takes an alliance, and a closely-bound one.

Why do the Central Europeans want to join Nato? They wish to feel secure, and to join the family of democratic European nations where they belong. But enlarging Nato will not just be good for them. It will be good for us too. We will be entrenching Nato's democratic values across our continent. By adding to the stability of Central Europe, we reduce the risk of our sons and daughters ever having to fight in another European war.

Already, the prospect of joining Nato is helping Central European countries to overcome ethnic and territorial disputes. And once these countries feel secure, they will have the confidence to develop better relations with Russia, enhancing everyone's security.

Clearly, accepting new members in Nato must not weaken the alliance. We must fully safeguard Nato's ability to defend its own members. We shall not compromise the principle that the security of the alliance will remain indivisible. The new members must enjoy the same security within Nato as the existing ones.

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider what would happen if Nato were not to enlarge. First, the countries of Central Europe would fear that Russia was able to reassert its hegemony over them. And we would be accepting a Russian veto on Nato's decisions. The steady, predictable strategy of enlargement that has been established for three years would be halted in its tracks, creating once again a line down the middle of the map of Europe. We must tear down the old iron curtain, not rust-proof and repaint it.

Secondly, if left outside Nato, the Central Europeans would have to make their own national security arrangements, which would divert much-needed money to a dangerous arms race. New regional alliances might spring up. There could be new tremors along old fault-lines.

Not all countries wishing to join Nato will be invited at the alliance's Madrid summit in July to do so. But Nato's door will not close on them. Enlargement is an evolutionary process, taking into account political and security developments in the whole of Europe; it is a process that must enhance the security of all. Nato will develop a dynamic partnership with countries to its east for practical co-operation and political consultation. I hope that Nato can formalise a new relationship with Ukraine, a partner vital to Europe's stability.

Neither the new Nato nor its expansion poses a threat to Russia. To deepen the security of all of Europe, all of Europe needs to be involved. And no European country is more important to European security than Russia. Its size and importance demand that we treat Russia as a full partner. Russia's relationship with Nato is as important to peace in Europe as Nato's enlargement.

I have seen it argued, in this newspaper and elsewhere, that enlarging Nato will inflame nationalistic and militaristic sentiments in Russia. I do not share that view. Russia's security will be stronger if its neighbours are secure and stable.

Russia has much to gain from change in Nato. The Nato of today and tomorrow is not the Nato of old. The alliance has no plans, no intention and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members. Nato will offer Russia practical co-operation and unprecedented consultation. I am confident that a deal will be struck this summer between Nato and Russia to create a new strategic partnership.

To make the whole of Europe as peaceful and secure as Western Europe, we need to extend Nato's assurances and habits of trust. Nato is on course to do this through its enlargement, by establishing new relationships with Russia and Ukraine, and by strengthening co-operation with all of our partners to the east. If we involve all Europe in Europe's security, we can entrench freedom and trust for us all.

The author is Foreign Secretary. He will be speaking on this subject today in Washington.

Most of the proposed constitutional changes are inconclusive. No one knows where they would lead

# Labour is going to sea in a sieve

Sometimes we all miss the point. When Stephen Dorrell made the rather off-hand comment that the Conservatives might abolish a Scottish parliament, his statement was immediately reversed by the Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth and repudiated by John Major. Commentators, including myself, all agreed that once a Scottish parliament had been created, it could never be un-created, and most of us shared in a general tut-tutting at Dorrell's indiscretion. Of course, as far as it goes, that view was justified: Michael Forsyth was right on the particular point and Stephen Dorrell was wrong. But it is not true of any of the other constitutional changes which the Labour Party is proposing. The Dorrell question — are constitutional changes reversible? — is a constitutional changes reversible? — is a good one.

He has hit on one of the most important issues in Britain's political future. Once a nation starts to change its constitution in fundamental ways, change is bound to continue. The first constitutional change does not settle these matters; the new arrangements will always lack the settled authority of the old ones; it will be debated while they are being introduced, and the same means that are being used to introduce them may be used to alter them.

This is true even in the Scottish case. It will indeed be impossible for the Unionists to abolish a parliament that has been approved by a referendum and has actually come into existence. But the Scottish National Party will continue to argue that this should become the parliament of an independent Scotland.

The Scottish constitutional issue may only be open to debate from one side, but it will be far from settled. The creation of a Scottish parliament, with every prospect of its quarrelling with the Westminster Parliament, will strengthen the pressures for full independence. After all, the Conservatives have been in power for 18 years at Westminster, but in all that time they have never had a majority

in Scotland. Can anyone suppose that Margaret Thatcher's reforms would not have been bitterly rejected by a Scottish parliament? If there had been a Scottish parliament since 1979, there might well have been an independent Scotland already.

The proposed Welsh assembly would also bring demands for increasing powers. There Stephen Dorrell's suggestion could conceivably apply; if a Welsh assembly were to become hostile to the Westminster Parliament, and a new Conservative government saw it as an experiment which had failed, it is conceivable that Wales might be offered the choice between full independence and full reintegration back into the Westminster system. Certainly any English regional authorities could be abolished: none of them would have the standing of the old Greater London Council, and Margaret Thatcher abolished that without a constitutional crisis.

Robin Cook last week reached an agreement with the Liberal Democrats to hold a referendum on electoral reform in the next Parliament. There are many possibilities. If the Conservatives in Opposition were to be benefiting from the usual mid-Parliament protests at the time of the referendum, they might well persuade voters to keep the status quo, to the disappointment of Robin Cook and the relief of Tony Blair. Labour might opt for the alternative vote system, which gives electors second or subsequent preferences in existing single member constituencies. That would not

be described as "first past the post pump", but is favoured by the Liberal Democrats. Each system has its advantages and disadvantages, though proportional systems tend to encourage the development of extreme parties, and to reduce the independence of individual members. New Labour would hardly have been possible in a fully proportional system, which is perhaps why Robin Cook supports such a system and Tony Blair does not.

For the Conservatives, a proportional system could be more attractive than they imagine; apart from Europe, there are no issues likely to split the Conservative Party. Take away Europe, and

Kenneth Clarke and John Redwood hold entirely compatible but not identical views. The Labour Party is a coalition of old and new Labour. In a proportional system it would inevitably have become two parties in the 1950s, as it would in the 1980s and probably in the 1990s. If proportional representation resulted in there being a single Conservative Party, a Liberal Democrat Party, a social democrat party (new Labour) and a socialist party (old Labour), it would probably be favourable to the Tories. It would also be good for the Liberals, who would usually be junior partners in either a Right-Centre or a Left-Centre coalition, although a coalition between Conservatives and social democrats might work better than one between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats.

Proportional representation is always unattractive to any radical politician, as it was to Margaret Thatcher; it gives the Centre a veto on change. It is an anti-radical brake, which I remember supporting in the 1970s when there seemed to be a risk of a radical socialist government. After 1988 the Gaullists in France abolished proportional representation and replaced it with the present French Constitution. If the next Parliament changes Britain's electoral system, that is likely to be the first change rather than the last.

Even the Labour Party admits that its proposed reform of the House of Lords, by abolishing the hereditary peers, is

only an interim measure. It would leave the Lords and a wholly appointed revising chamber of life peers, an unelected super-quango. That would be entirely undemocratic and not very efficient. Life peers have no constituencies to keep them answerable, or to keep them informed. They tend to be appointed as a sort of retirement, and their average age is high. Indeed the only very young peers are hereditary ones. If life peers are in touch with the experience of younger people, it is usually only through their children or grandchildren. No one would design such a body, and no one has produced an intelligent defence for it.

Each of the constitutional reforms proposed by the Labour Party would therefore be the beginning and not the end of a process of change. Will Scotland become independent? If Scotland stays in the United Kingdom, how can a Scottish parliament be reconciled with the Westminster Parliament, or with the position of Wales and the English regions? Should we change the British electoral system? If so, how? What sort of Upper House would work best? These are all constitutional questions which Labour might be able to open, but not to close. The effect may be rather like that of the more necessary 1832 Reform Act, which raised issues which, if one includes votes for women, took a hundred years to settle.

Above all, there is the constitutional issue of Europe. If the Labour government does take Britain further towards membership of a European superstate, it will unite the Conservatives in a much tougher Euroscepticism. The further Labour takes Britain in, the more likely the Tories will be to want to take Britain out. The nation will be polarised on the European issue and public opinion is already moving in a Eurosceptical direction. Since women were given the vote, Britain has not seen rioting in the streets over constitutional issues. New Labour may live to regret setting out to sea in this particular sieve.

# Well done, Prime Minister

Peter Riddell  
says John Major's  
achievements  
should not be  
forgotten in defeat

All long-serving governments end in tears. In the struggle for personal survival and for advantage in opposition, fractiousness and recrimination distort perspective. Achievements are ignored and leaders are criticised for defeats which probably could not have been avoided. That happened in 1905 and 1964 to the Tories, and to Labour in 1951, and is occurring again now after 18 years of Conservative rule, and nearly 64 years with John Major as Prime Minister. But instead of blaming Mr Major, Tories should praise him for extending their period in office. The Major years will be seen by historians as not a dismal aftermath to the allegedly golden Thatcher era, but rather as a crucial period when Thatcherism was taken further and entrenched.

Mr Major should be a hero in the Thatcherite pantheon, not the villain he is portrayed as by the likes of Alastair McAlpine and George Gardiner, both now part of the disillusioned band who have signed up for Sir James Goldsmith's experiment in fantasy politics. For the true believers who have never reconciled themselves to her fall, Margaret Thatcher was everything and Mr Major is nothing, a weak man who has betrayed her legacy. McAlpine's waspish and ultimately rather sad memoir shows that he never really understood politics. He was a creature of the salon and the saleroom rather than the seminar.

Like many Thatcher courtiers, he was fixated by her and could never appreciate the contribution of the other main architects of Thatcherism: Geoffrey Howe, Norman Tebbit and Nigel Lawson. Her falling out with them in the second half of the 1980s was wholly different from her earlier routing of the patrician "wets" that established her ascendancy. But courtiers like McAlpine



RIDDELL ON MONDAY

saw both groups as traitors. They could never understand that all politicians are mortal, and that by the end of the 1980s it was time for her to go. She had made her immense contribution to changing the direction of Britain, and by then had lost touch. The survival of Thatcherism required a new leader.

The Tories would, I believe, have lost their majority in a general election in 1991-92 if Mrs Thatcher had remained Prime Minister. Of course, many voters would have still been hostile to Neil Kinnock and sceptical about Labour's tax and spending plans. But that would have been offset by Mrs Thatcher's personal unpopularity and her resistance to scrapping the poll tax. As my colleague Michael Gove recently wrote in *The Times Literary Supplement*, Michael Heseltine's challenge to Mrs Thatcher made a fourth Conserva-

tive prime minister possible and "like Bonaparte, Heseltine saved the revolution from itself".

By contrast with Margaret Thatcher, Mr Major appeared as a healer and a unifier, a fresh face at the head of a new Government. That freshness soon disappeared, particularly after sterling's forced exit from the European exchange-rate mechanism, but the victory of April 1992 has given the Tories five years in office that they would otherwise not have had. So obsessed are many Tories with Europe that they forget what else has happened. Privatisation has been extended; long overdue changes in the running of public services have been introduced; the Citizen's Charter and performance tables have increased pressure to im-

prove standards; attempts have been made to control the growth in the social security budget and to help or push those on benefits back into work; and macro-economic policy has been put on a more sensible and open basis. This has all been done despite many mistakes, some of which date back to the rows at the end of the Thatcher era, and some of which reflect Mr Major's willingness to raise public spending in the 1987-92 period. Nonetheless, overall, the Major years have seen the completion and development of the Thatcherite programme, as well as reforms in the public sector which have been more radical than she contemplated.

But the crucial result of Mr Major's premiership, and especially his victory in April 1992, has been the acceptance of much of this by Labour. Even though Mr Kinnock's now underappreciated

policy reviews of the late 1980s had jettisoned many of the party's past commitments, ambiguities remained, particularly over the unions and public services. Tony Blair recognised at the time that Labour had not changed enough. Over the past five years, the Labour leadership has broadly accepted a free-market approach and tight public spending and tax constraints. Privatisation and the union laws of the 1980s will not be reversed.

There are, of course, many questions about how genuine and deep is "new" Labour's commitment to these policies. Many of its instincts favour state solutions, as shown by the stridently negative initial reaction to Peter Lilley's pension proposals last week. Labour is still cool on real choice in education and favours centrally directed initiatives to improve standards. Even in its cautious Blairite form, Labour would be more than just the human face of Thatcherism. Its priorities would be different — for instance on helping the long-term and young unemployed. But a Blair government would operate within, and largely accept, an economic framework and limits on government created in the Thatcher and Major years.

Yet if Mr Major has ensured that the Thatcher legacy in economic and social policy will be lasting, he has had to cope with its political contradictions. By temperament as well as circumstance, he has never been able to master the deep divisions within his party over Europe. All he has been able to do is to manoeuvre to keep his Government and party more or less intact, to the satisfaction of few. Mr Major has also been slow to understand the worries about abuse of power raised by one party being in office for so long. And when he has tried to provide reassurance, as for instance through the appointment of the Nolan inquiry, he has annoyed his own side.

A real Conservative would appreciate that no party, and no prime minister, can remain in office for ever. I do not agree with those who believe a period in opposition will do the Tories good. Just ask any Labour MP. Opposition is likely to be disagreeable and divisive. But defeat should be accepted as having probably been inevitable, whoever had been party leader. Instead of vilifying Mr Major, the Tory party should recognise how much he has done for it.

# Closing ranks

LONDON'S taxi drivers are preparing to sabotage the Prime Minister. This morning he will be answering questions on Scott Chisholm's show on Talk Radio, a station devoted to phone-ins and endless windbagging, and a favourite of the "You'll never guess who I had in the back of my cab" school.

The black cab drivers, however, are gearing up to clog the switchboards with questions about the problem of minicabs touring round London, which they feel is undermining their business. Posters have gone up in certain areas urging Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, to impose restrictions on minicabs or resign.

The Prime Minister's appearance on what cabbies regard as their station offers them the chance to get a decent answer to their question, and never mind Europe, taxes or any other issue.

Talk Radio, however, is prepared. "We have been recording questions, names and phone numbers for three days," says a spokesman. "When there are lots of calls from the same number we ignore them. If anyone gets on air asking the same questions, we'll just cut



Big Kiss, a vicious first novel by David Huggins, son of the Sherlock Holmes actor Jeremy Brett. The book's greatest claim to literary distinction is winning last year's Bad Sex Prize, handed out by Auberon Waugh's notoriously unsexy Literary Review, for a bedroom scene of blanket-kicking awfulness.

## G swizz

PITY Brad Irwin and Suzanne Troy of Denver, Colorado, who have seen their wedding plans steamrollered by the Group of Seven world leaders. Irwin and Miss Troy put down a \$1,000 deposit last October to wed on June 21 in the atrium of the Denver Museum of Natural History, with its impressive views over the Rocky

Mountains. Unfortunately, the G7 has decided to hold its annual summit in the museum, and for some reason, the leaders of Britain, Canada, Germany, France, Italy and the United States take precedence.

The museum offered the couple an alternative date, but caterers and photographers had been booked and printed invitations have already gone out for that day. Irwin thinks he may have a solution. "If the President's in Denver," he says, "then how about we use the White House?" He awaits a reply.

## No support

GOOD and bad news for Tony Blair. The good news is that Bernard Manning is no fan. "His party appears to dictate to him," says the comedian in this month's *Esquire*. "John Prescott seems to be working him with his foot like a dummy. I shouldn't think he'd make a good Prime Minister: you need someone like Churchill or Enoch Powell."

The bad news is that Irvine Welsh, author of *Trainspotting* and one would have imagined, a natural Labour supporter, is no fan either.

"Blair has the same policies as John Major," he says, "so he'll

make the same kind of Prime Minister. Stylistically, he'll probably be more slick and smarmy."



## Still rolling

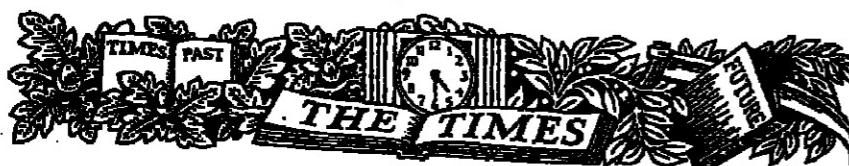
KATE MOSS, the model, appears to have a new walker. She has been spending a conspicuous amount of time during her recent trips to London with Tarka "The Otter" Campbell, a young Scottish aristocrat and a resident of Notting Hill Gate. Campbell, who is in his late twenties and of independent means, runs with a fast set which includes Lord and Lady Durham and gaggles of junior Pakenhams, led by the barrister Orlando Fraser, the son of Lady Antonia.



Kate Depp-privation

All of which leaves the question of Johnny Depp, the film star, to whom Miss Moss has been publicly attached for the past couple of years. Depp has a reputation for smashing up hotel rooms when jealous. Campbell, reassuringly, is said not to be the sort to duck when the make-up pots start flying.

P.H.S



## THE POOR RELATION

Primary education deserves more attention — and money

The first seven years of a child's education are more important than any others. In this time they are taught the literacy and numeracy from which all further studies follow. They learn the discipline, independence and respect for others which are vital for adjustment to secondary school. A good primary school can set children up for life; a bad one can blight their chances.

From tomorrow, when we publish the first league tables of primary school results, parents will be able to rely on more than word of mouth in choosing the right school for their young children. All this week, *The Times* will be concentrating on primary education, state and private, with advice on which characteristics to look for in a good school, how to interpret the league tables, and how the tests work.

Tomorrow's tables are not perfect; like all rankings, particularly at their inception, they are open to criticism. They do not measure the improvement a school has wrought on its pupils. Until the five-year-old tests have been up and running for six years, it will be difficult to assess the "value added" by a school. But they do show that schools with similar intakes can produce wildly different results. This information may be embarrassing to teachers, but it is very useful to parents.

Although the national results in English and maths show a ten-point improvement on last year, they are still unimpressive. Only 55.57 per cent of 11-year-olds reached the expected levels. These are not average levels; they are the standards that all 11-year-olds without special educational needs should be able to achieve. In the worst schools, some 11-year-olds are four or five years behind in reading, writing and arithmetic. No other Western country has such a large number trailing so far at this stage.

The result is that too many children enter secondary school unable to cope with the academic demands made upon them. If they have a reading age of seven, they cannot

keep up with the lessons. Alienated by their surroundings, they are naturally tempted to play truant and turn to crime. The most important task for the next government will be to address this educational dip that occurs between the age of seven — when the vast majority of children are achieving good standards — and 11, by which age many have fallen behind.

In these later years of primary school, ten subjects are on the national curriculum. Yet one class teacher is expected to teach them all. In private schools, children usually have the same teacher for all subjects until they are about eight; then they are taught by specialists. Such an approach has generally been resisted by state schools, but there is much to commend it, particularly in technical subjects such as maths, science and information technology.

The other necessary reform is for pupils of roughly the same ability to be taught together. Good primary schools already group children by ability, either within the class or, if the school is big enough, in different streams. A less rigid attachment to chronological age would help even more. If brighter children were allowed to move up the school faster and those who were struggling could learn with younger children, teachers would no longer have to deal with an unmanageable wide range of ability in one classroom. The aim should be to ensure that no normal child left primary school without the basic skills needed to cope with the next stage of education.

Not all these reforms, however, are costless. There are not enough specialist teachers, for instance, in maths and science. If a new government were to give primary education the attention that it deserved, it might question why only £2,053 a year is spent on each pupil compared with £2,728 on those in secondary schools. The spotlight has now been shone on the early years of education; perhaps it is time for a reordering of financial priorities too.

## SCOTTISH QUESTIONS

Supporters of devolution must come up with some answers

The success of the Scottish Labour Party conference, with Tony Blair enjoying an enthusiastic reception and victory in internal battles, masks deeper problems for the party in what should be its heartland. Those problems are not insuperable, but they will require harder thinking and straighter talking than the party has so far been prepared to embrace.

As our election guide today shows, Labour's plans to set up a parliament in Edinburgh reflect majority opinion in Scotland; and the party's Scottish MPs have been sincere in trying to create an assembly which can command cross-party support within Scotland. Their proposals, however, while conceived in hope are flawed in execution. They take insufficient account of Scotland's relationship with the rest of the United Kingdom and could place a strain on the Union they are intended to save. If devolution is to work and the potential of decentralisation is to be harnessed, Labour will have to risk the wrath of its nationalist wing to find the right solutions.

It may be that support for self-government changes with a change of government. A great deal of the momentum for constitutional change springs from frustration that Scotland has sent a Labour majority to Westminster and been governed by Conservative ministers. The Government has been blamed by Scots for industrial decline and insensitive administration, not least the early introduction of the poll tax.

Much of the anger is misplaced. Scotland's traditional smokestack industries could not have survived the pace of global economic change and the Scottish economy, thanks to Tory reforms and an impressive inward investment record, is in good heart. The poll tax was implemented early in Scotland not because of thoughtlessness but a desire by ministers to spare Scots the pain of a difficult rates revaluation. If Scotland

was a guinea-pig, it was a pampered one. Nevertheless, the demand for autonomy is real. The Scottish Secretary, Michael Forsyth, deserves credit for trying to satisfy it within current constitutional structures by imaginative gestures and an activist administrative posture. Scots voters are still likely to vote for more. Labour should not assume, however, that victory at the polls would be a licence to legislate for its current scheme.

The first flaw lies in Labour's referendum plan. Scots are being invited to make too large a leap in the dark, being asked to vote on the principle of devolution before a Bill has gone through Parliament. The second weakness is Labour's refusal satisfactorily to answer the West Lothian question. Why should Scots MPs be able to vote on education in England when English MPs have no say in Scotland?

It is true, as Labour points out, that Ulster MPs enjoyed that right during the lifetime of Stormont. But while Stormont existed, Ulster's representation at Westminster was reduced. If Labour insists, as it does at present, on keeping Scotland's 72 seats at Westminster then the English, understandably, will have cause for resentment. If Labour had a majority of English MPs that would take some sting out of the question but it would not resolve the matter.

There are other potential pitfalls. Once a Scottish parliament were set up, the role of the Scottish Secretary in the UK Cabinet would be, at best, marginal. Scotland's voice within the UK would be less strong. The tax-varying powers promised could call into question the current generous level of Exchequer grant. They are, however, not nearly large enough to satisfy nationalist complaints that Scotland's grievances could be better addressed with greater fiscal freedom. Those who sincerely want devolution to work have a duty to ensure that these genuine concerns are addressed.

## PUTTING LEFT TO RIGHTS

A new era is at hand for the southpaw

Thanks to the Wykehamist ingenuity of the musician Christopher Seed, pianos can now be tailored for the left-handed. Until now, the left hand has been the honest manual labourer on the keyboard, relegated to dull repetitive work while the right enjoys artisan status, given delicate melodies to construct. Mr Seed, after a few happy hours playing with his electronic organ, was able, as it were, to put the boot on the other hand and reverse the structure of the keyboard. The resulting liberation of the left-handed pianist is not only a boon to many hitherto handicapped musicians; it is also a symbolic blow for digital equality.

Mr Seed's latest invention is, however, of a different order from many of the gadgets which have gone before. The fruit of his labour will allow the fiendish arpeggios of especially demanding composers to fall in the range of many players who until now were, like David Evans, MP, too clumsy and heavy-handed on the right. For left-handed pianists, the invention promises, as with the advent of the credit card, a Chopin revolution. It is an advance that, whichever hand one claps with, deserves enthusiastic applause.

In the past, southpaws had to endure vilification as poisonous as any meted out to a minority. In medieval villages, left-handers were suspected of supping with

Satan and prejudices did not die with the unfortunate victims at the stake. As late as Queen Victoria's reign, left-handed children had to have their disability "corrected" by being forced to write with what the authorities considered to be, in every sense, the right hand.

Left-handers have only recently found themselves treated on terms of rough equality and, as with so many minorities, it is the market rather than any ideology which has been their truest liberator. Canny capitalists have opened new vistas as well as wine bottles for the left-handed, producing products from corkscrews to guitars designed to break down barriers for the sinister.

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It is an advance that, whichever hand one claps with, deserves enthusiastic applause.

Laird scored twice.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

### Doctors' worry on bugged surgeries

From the Chairman of the General Medical Services Committee, BMA, and others

Sir. The concerns expressed in our letter of January 20 about the threat to patient confidentiality posed by the Police Bill remain unaltered.

The maintenance of confidentiality lies at the heart of medical practice. A

doctor can be removed from the medical register for a breach of confidentiality; indeed the Law Commission recommended in 1981 that a breach of confidence be made a statutory offence. Yet, under the agreement on the Bill between the Government and the Opposition, prior approval from a commissioner — a High Court judge appointed by the Prime Minister — will not be necessary before the police can carry out covert surveillance or "bugging" of a doctor's surgery or hospital ward in "urgent cases". The police can listen in and then seek retrospective approval from the commissioner.

We believe that the decision to violate the confidentiality of the very personal information that patients communicate to a doctor should only be made by a High Court judge, who has no vested interest in "getting a result". The police are already obliged to seek the assistance of the doctor or the authority of a circuit judge before they can have access to a patient's medical notes. The same protection should be given to the conversations between patient and doctor which inform the patient's medical record.

In those rare cases where it is the doctor who is suspected of abusing his or her professional position and engaging in serious criminal activity, we believe that it should be for an independent judge to weigh the public interest in the enforcement of the criminal law and in the maintenance of the trust patients have in their doctors.

Yours faithfully,

IAN G. BOGLE,  
Chairman,  
General Medical Services  
Committee, BMA.

NORMAN BROWSE  
(Chairman, Joint Consultants Committee).

JAMES N. JOHNSON  
(Chairman, Central Consultants and  
Specialist Committee, BMA).

A. W. MACARA  
(Chairman of Council, BMA).

NAREN PATEL  
(Chairman, Academy of Royal Colleges).

KEITH PETERS  
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British Medical Association,  
Tavistock Square, WC1).

March 4.

### Planning 'propriety'

From Dr Richard Fordham

Sir, I would like to support the President of the Royal Town Planning Institute (letter, March 6) in his criticism of Mr John Gummer's belief that local planning decisions on sites for social housing are being determined more by political and electoral considerations than planning ones.

We are the main firm carrying out housing needs surveys for councils, and in the related field of negotiating social housing from developers. We have worked for about a quarter of the councils in England and Wales and would say that councils act pretty diligently in planning for housing sites on which they then negotiate social housing wherever possible.

The main recent problem has been the government advice for which Mr Gummer, as Secretary of State for the Environment, is responsible. This defines logic by including low-cost market-priced housing in the definition of affordable/social housing and also encourages developers to buy out of their obligation to provide social housing.

Both these actions reduce the scope of councils to respond directly to housing needs.

The inclusion of low-cost market housing in the definition of affordable/social housing was, I have been told, a political decision by ministers. In my opinion it comes far closer to impropriety than anything I have witnessed from councils.

Yours faithfully,

RICHARD FORDHAM  
(Managing Director,  
Fordham Research Services,  
99 Talbot Road, W11).

March 7.

### Rules of cohabitation

From Mr Hugh G. Meechan

Sir, Lord Rees-Mogg states (article, March 6) that "The implication of a preference for cohabitation over marriage is that there is an unwillingness of one partner or the other, or both, to commit to permanence". For myself and my partner, and I am sure many others, this is not correct.

Our choice not to get married is because we do not see it as necessary to involve the State in our commitment to each other. It should not be necessary to have "absolute rules" imposed by the State to ensure that we stay together.

Yours faithfully,

HUGH G. MEECHAN,  
100 Bishops Park,  
Mid Calder, West Lothian.  
March 6.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

Merv Priest for the winner.

### Fairer spending on schooling for all

From the Shadow Secretary of State for Education and Employment

Sir. Margot Norman (article, March 1) is wrong both in her analysis of the costs and relative benefits of assisted places and in her view that this is the only way in which bridges can be built between the independent and state sectors.

Labour's proposal is to phase out, not to abolish, the scheme. We will provide no new places after this September. The £161 million saved will pay for our plan to reduce class sizes to 30 or under for half a million five-, six- and seven-year-olds currently in larger classes. This has been costed independently by the National Foundation for Educational Research at £68 million.

Labour does not accept the assessment cited by Ms Norman, which was commissioned by the independent schools and erroneously assumed that the marginal cost of educating the 6,000 pupils a year who might otherwise have gone on assisted places would be the same as the average cost. It is not, as the present Government, which has accommodated 318,000 extra state pupils over the last three years with no extra grant, could testify.

The best way to improve standards for all is both through a major improvement in the basics in primary school and the development of specialisms and the grouping of pupils by subject ability in secondary school. Labour has put forward clear proposals in this regard. I do also as Ms Norman mentions, favour partnerships with independent schools, both encouraging greater co-operation with state schools — and supporting facilities which are not available in the state sector, such as those in special or choir schools.

Yours sincerely,

MARGARET TULLOCH,  
Executive Secretary,  
Campaign for State Education,  
158 Durham Road, SW10.  
March 4.

### Sentencing of persistent burglars

From Baroness Blatch, Minister of State, Home Office

Sir, In my letter of February 19 on the Crime (Sentences) Bill I pointed out that there is very little progression in the sentencing of persistent burglars. The figures I gave were 16.2 months on first conviction, 18.9 months on a third-or-more conviction and 19.4 months on a seventh-or-more conviction.

Lord Ackner (letter, February 24) disputes these figures, on the grounds that they cover a sample of "only" 949 burglars (out of a total of 78,300 sentenced in those two years) and relate to a period when the courts were precluded from taking previous convictions into account when passing sentence.

However, figures based on a sample from convictions in 1994, by which time the courts were able to take previous convictions into account, show exactly the same pattern: average sentences of 15 months on first conviction and only 19 months on a third-or-more conviction. A complete analysis of all convictions in 1994 confirms the pattern.

The fact is that, however the figures are analysed, there is no evidence of any significant progression in sentencing for repeat burglars. That is why the Bill will require the courts to impose a minimum sentence of not less

than three years on third or subsequent conviction.

The Director of Justice, in her letter accompanying Lord Ackner's, argues that mandatory sentences will result in more contested trials, and "plea bargains" between the prosecution and the defence. The answer to the first point is that the Bill allows the court to reduce mandatory sentences by up to 20 per cent to take account of timely guilty pleas, thus providing an incentive for those who are guilty to plead guilty.

The second point, frankly, is no more than scaremongering: I do not believe for a moment that the Crown Prosecution Service would be party to "circumventing mandatory sentences" as she suggests.

Finally, Sir Frederick Lawton (also on the same page) asks what constitutes "exceptional circumstances" for the purpose of the discretion that judges will have to set aside mandatory penalties. That will be a matter for the courts themselves to determine in all the circumstances of the particular case — as it is already in relation to the power to impose a suspended sentence of imprisonment.

Yours sincerely,

EMILY BLATCH,  
Home Office,  
Queen Anne's Gate, SW1.  
February 26.

### Benefits of Europe

From the Chairman of the European Movement — United Kingdom

Sir. Yesterday the European Movement launched Europe 97, a major information campaign to give British people facts about the benefits of Britain's EU membership.

The campaign details 97 reasons to be in Europe, ranging from the expansion in trade with Europe to examples of companies which have done well out of the single market. It will show that our membership of the EU has led to improved environmental standards and helped to secure the longest unbroken period of peace in Europe

for 300 years. British business is more successful, British people are better off, and Britain is a more influential nation in the world because Britain is a member of the European Union.

The campaign is financed with a grant of £150,000 from the European Commission and £100,000 from British business and is receiving support from trade unions and representatives of all political parties.

Yours sincerely,

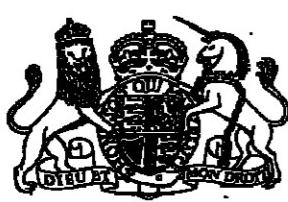
GILES RADICE, Chairman,  
European Movement —  
United Kingdom,  
Dean Bradley House,  
52 Horseferry Road, SW1.  
March 7.

### Library example

From Mr Walter Corbett

Sir. One evening last week I was shown round the glistening new *Centre Ulysse* in the little town of Lamalou-les-Bains, in the South of France. On the roof, an array of satellite dishes, and beneath it, rooms full of computers, a "library" packed with CD-Roms, and a computer-equipped lecture theatre.

Membership of the "library" costs 50 francs (£5.50) a year; use of a computer to access the Internet, 45 francs an hour. There are classes in computer literacy for young and old. Local businesses, hospitals and professional people can use video-conferencing facilities to access clients, or expert opinion, worldwide.



## COURT CIRCULAR

### BUCKINGHAM PALACE

March 8: The Duke of Edinburgh, Founder and Chairman of the International Trustees, this morning presented certificates to young people participating in The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, at the British School, Muscat, Oman.

His Royal Highness, President Emeritus, this evening attended a dinner for the World Wide Fund for Nature, in Muscat.

### BUCKINGHAM PALACE

March 8: The Prince Edward, Trustee, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award World Fellowship Luncheon at Government House and was received by the Governor-General (His Excellency Sir Orville Turnquest).

The Prince Edward afterwards attended an Award presentation ceremony at Government House.

### Royal engagements

The Queen, accompanied by the Prince of Wales, will attend the Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey at 3.15. Later, they will attend the Commonwealth Day Service at Marlborough House at 6.30. The Prince of Wales, a President of Business in the Community, will give a reception for participants in Business in the Environment's Index of Corporate Environmental Engagement at St James's Palace at 3.30.

### Memorial services

Mrs Elspeth Huxley A memorial service for Mrs Elspeth Huxley, novelist, was held on Saturday at Galesby Parish Church, Chelmsford, Essex. The Rev Barry Rawlinson officiated. Mr Hugh Huxley, grandson, and Mr Charles Huxley, son, read the lesson. Mr Jonathan Huxley, grandson, read a passage from 'The Scribe' and Mr Alexander Huxley, grandson, read his own work. Traveller, where do you go?

The Right Hon Sir John Fisher May A memorial service for the Right Hon Sir John May will be held in Temple Church on Wednesday, March 19, 1997, at 8pm.

His Royal Highness later flew to West Palm Beach, Florida, United States of America and this evening attended a dinner in support of the International Award for Young People at Elephant Walk.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE March 8: The Princess Royal, President, Save the Children Fund, accompanied by Captain Timothy Laurence RN, this evening attended the West Midlands Appeal Gala Dinner and Ball at the Hilton Convention Centre, Birmingham, and was received by Mr Roger Dickens (Deputy Lieutenant of West Midlands).

BUCKINGHAM PALACE March 9: The Duke of Edinburgh this morning left Oman to fly to Mongolia. This evening His Royal Highness arrived in Ulaan Bataar.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE March 9: The Prince Edward this evening arrived at Heathrow Airport, London, from the United States of America.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sean O'Dwyer was in attendance.

### Forthcoming marriages

Dr P.R.A. Abrahams and Miss A.J. Devenny The engagement is announced between Paul, younger son of Mr A.C.W. Abrahams, of London, and Mrs L. Myking, of Cambridge, and Abigail, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs F. Devenny, of Mississauga, Canada.

Señor J. Parlaide and the Hon Louisa Heyer Miller The engagement is announced between Jaime, son of Señor Francisco Parlaide and Señora Mary Parlaide, of Banahavis, Malaga, Spain, and Louisa, younger daughter of Lord and Lady Inchrya, of Kings Somborne, Hampshire.

Mr G.W. Sanderson and Miss C.A. Oates The engagement is announced between George, only son of Mr and Mrs Colin Sanderson, of Irby upon Humber, Lincolnshire, and Caike, daughter of Mr and Mrs Keith Oates, of the Principality of Monaco and Kensington, London.

Nature notes appear on the facing page today

## Marriages

Captain G.R. Denison-Smith and Miss L.M.P. Stephenson The marriage took place on Saturday at the Church of St Michael and All Angels, Badminton, of Captain Guy Robert Denison-Smith, son of Lieutenant-General Sir Anthony and Lady Denison-Smith, of Gasfield, Essex, to Miss Lucinda Mary Pamela Stephenson, daughter of Mr. Timothy Stephenson, of Weyhill, Hampshire, and of Mrs Nerissa Stephenson, of Diddington, Gloucestershire. The Rev C. Mulholland officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Sophie Jevson, Isabel Jevson, Sophie Sturz, Sophie Breitmeier, and Miss Minette Stevenson. Mr Simon Denison-Smith was best man.

A guard of honour was found by non-commissioned officers of the Grenadier Guards.

A reception was held at Grindleton House, Grindleton, and the honeymoon will be spent in Mexico and New York.

Mr C.J. Holliday and Mrs H.O. Terry

The marriage took place on Saturday, March 8, at St Mary's Church, Batsford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire of Christopher James (Kit) Holliday, widower of Margaret of Painswick, and Heather Dawn Terry, nee King, widow of John, of Batsford.

The reception was held at Wyke Hill House Hotel, Stow-on-the-Wold.

Mr R.J. Simon and Miss I.J. Macleod

The marriage took place on February 15, 1997, at Greyfriars Booth and Highland Kirk, Edinburgh, of Russell James (Kit) Simon, of Cape Town, and long-time elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Norman S.M. Macleod, of Dumfries. The Rev D.M. Beckett, BA, BD, officiated.

### Dinner

London Cornish Association Lord St Levan, President of the London Cornish Association, accompanied by Lady St Levan, presided at the annual anniversary dinner held on Saturday at the Portman Hotel, Sir Vernon Secombe, President of the Cornwall Family History Society, was the principal speaker and Ms Ann Treneman Jenkins, Deputy Grand Bard of the Cornish Gorsedd, was the principal guest.

### University news

Cambridge, King's College Elected into professorial fellowships: George Petros Efstathiou, Peter Lipton.



Tasha Wainwright, 10, tests the scent of a *Laelia Harpophylla* orchid

## Exotic orchids have rare appeal

By ALAN TOOGOOD, HORTICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

A SINISTER-LOOKING orchid with green cobra-like flowers found in Belize by staff from the Irish National Botanic Gardens proved one of the stars of the London Orchid Show.

Named *Sarcostylis Scaphoides*, the orchid is one of many species recently collected from Belize for the Glasnevin Gardens in Dublin. The gardens have a revitalisation programme for orchids and are building up collections of various kinds for conservation and research.

Exhibits from the USA, Belgium, Holland and France gave the show, staged by the Royal Horticultural Society at Westminster over the weekend, a truly international flavour. J. & L. Orchidei of Connecticut, known for their rare species, staged a collection of miniatures from the high-

lands of South America, one of the most eye-catching being the bright orange *Masdevallia Hurtzii*.

Miniature species from South-East Asia were featured by the Equatorial Plant Company, of Barnard Castle, Co Durham. Many of the tiny plants nestled among moss on pieces of tree trunk, including the red-flowered *Dendrobium Cuthbertsonii* from New Guinea.

A gold medal display from Ivens Orchids of Sandrech, Herefordshire, also had cymbidiums as a centrepiece: a mixture of Sarah Jean 'The Bride' whose white flowers have a hint of pink; Sarah Jean 'Ice Cascade' with pure white pendulous flowers; and Dag whose green-yellow flowers have a white lip.

A new orchid company, Orchid Answers of Almington, West Sussex, established by Ray Bilton who was previously with McLean's Orchids, has been awarded a gold medal for a fine display of cymbidiums and phalaenopsis. The latter were arranged in the form of a double helix, a novel idea which showed them off particularly well.

A gold medal was awarded to Vacheron and Lehoullier of St Ledger, France, for a display of brilliantly coloured hybrids.

The following exhibitors of orchid photographs, paintings and drawings won gold medals: Johan Hermans of Enfield, north London (photographs of the genus *Dracula*); Camilla Speight, of Camberwell, south London (pen and ink drawings of anguillans and lycastis); and Ann Swann, of Teddington, west London (water-colour paintings).

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## OBITUARIES

## BRIGADIER ANTHONY HARPER

Brigadier Anthony Harper, CBE, former British military attaché in Moscow, died on February 21 aged 80. He was born on July 17, 1916.

**T**ony Harper was on the front pages of newspapers throughout the world 30 years ago when, while serving as Britain's military attaché in Moscow, he was drugged and beaten up by the KGB. It happened in November 1967 during a visit by Harper and his American counterpart Colonel William Spahr to a wine-making plant near Kishinev, Moldavia. In the company of their guide from Intourist, they sampled a selection of the plant's products before returning to their hotel. There both men were taken violently ill.

While they were incapacitated six "heavies" from the Soviet secret police burst in. They forcibly held down the two men, strip-searched them and seized their notebooks and several rolls of film.

The incident provoked strong protests from Washington and the Foreign Office which described it as a "serious breach of diplomatic immunity". Nor did the Russians help matters by responding with a counter-claim. They accused the two Westerners of being drunk and disorderly, insisting the Intourist officials had helped them to their room where they had made such a disturbance that the hotel manager had had to call the police. Torn curtains and a glass ashtray — smashed when the KGB had broken in — were produced by the Soviet authorities to support their case. They said that the damage had been caused by Spahr and Harper.

But subsequent medical examinations produced evidence that the diplomats had been served with tampered drinks — "Mickey Finns", once a stock in trade of thriller writers. The Russians, it emerged, had been searching for evidence of dealings with Soviet dissidents.

But their masters in Washington and Whitehall cleared the two men of acting in any way improperly and, perhaps significantly, the Russians allowed them to complete their tour of duty without declaring either of them *persona non grata*. The KGB, it was assumed, had blundered.

Harper, who took some time to recover from the drugs he had unwittingly imbibed, was perhaps sustained



throughout the crisis by the military antecedents in his family.

Born in London, Charles Anthony des Noëtes Harper was the son of a general practitioner who had served as an army doctor in the First World War, and the great-great grandson of General Lefebvre des Noëtes, one of Napoleon's field commanders at Waterloo — and related to the Emperor by marriage. Captured by Wellington's men, he was transported across the Channel and detained in Britain as a prisoner of war.

Harper went to St Edward's School, Oxford, and thence to the Royal Veterinary College. But his studies were interrupted by the outbreak of war.

Commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1940, he spent the next four years in this country, initially with a mountain battery in Scotland, training with horses and mules for operations in Norway and Iceland. Harper won a C-in-C Home Forces Certificate for gallantry and good conduct in 1943 when he dived into the flooded River Spey to rescue a groom who had fallen in and been swept away during an exercise.

He also alarmed his colleagues while on location in Iceland when he drove a tent-pegs into a glacier crevice. There followed a discernible tremor and a loud roar as the ice around them moved a fraction of an inch. Harper served in the latter stages of the

campaign in North West Europe, as a gunnery staff officer with 12 Corps. Then, after the war, he took the decision to sign on.

Much of Harper's subsequent career was to be spent as a staff officer, with several tours of duty in the Far East. These included one as controller of the household to Britain's Commissioner-General for South-East Asia, Malcolm MacDonald, between 1951 and 1953. He became a great admirer of MacDonald, the son of the first Labour Prime Minister, and the two men remained friends until MacDonald's death.

He was military attaché in Moscow, 1966-68, once hosting a tea party for the Foreign Secretary, George Brown. On his return he was posted to Antwerp, where he oversaw the merger of the three advance bases for the Royal Navy, Army and RAF into one joint-services unit. He was appointed CBE in 1969 and retired in 1971.

But Harper's experience in Moscow was to help to provide him with a second career, initially as security adviser to the Central Treaty Organisation in Ankara between 1971 and 1974. On his return he was appointed an instructor at the School of Service Intelligence in Ashford, Kent. He spent the next eight years there, training future military attachés from other countries as well as Britain, for tours of duty in Iron Curtain countries.

Finally retiring in 1982, he was elected as a Conservative member of Ashford Borough Council, becoming leader of the council for five years in 1985. He was also chairman of the Kent Association of District Councils, 1989-90.

A friendly, courteous man, he was a popular and familiar figure in his village, at one time travelling round his ward by bicycle. He also remained a friend of Colonel Spahr — his American fellow-victim.

He met his wife Mary after the war while he was serving as a gunnery instructor at the Indian School of Artillery at Deolali. A South African who had served as a pilot in Britain during the war, she was staying with friends on the sub-continent following the death of her father. They married in India in 1947, being born to the reception on a gun carriage.

Harper, who died suddenly following a heart attack at home, is survived by his wife, herself in a nursing home, and by their daughter.

## CHRISTOPHER HOHLER

Christopher Hohler, art historian, died in Oslo on February 15 aged 80. He was born on January 22, 1917.

A MEMBER of the select group of scholars who shaped the Courtauld Institute in postwar years, Christopher Hohler was a figure of some importance in the art historical world. Yet outside the immediate circle of his colleagues and pupils, few would have realised this. Hohler nurtured no ambition to write, or to achieve recognition as an authority on any one subject — though he was an authority on many subjects.

He did not measure success in terms of appointments or publications. Rather his passion for the past, combined with a genial distaste for all things modern, made him an eccentric, if demanding, teacher. Those who studied under him were richly rewarded. For all his scholarly devotion, Hohler exuded vitality and a zest for life.

Edward Christopher Hohler was born into a family of some wealth and privilege. His boyhood at Long Crendon combined a serious interest in learning with the pursuit of country pastimes such as hunting — his mother considered him one of the most impetuous and irresponsible horsemen she had ever known. His career at Eton was followed by a degree in Modern History at New College, Oxford, from which he graduated in 1938. A year later he married his first wife, Jane.

Joining the Royal Corps of Signals during the Second World War, Hohler was posted to the Combined Intelligence Centre in Iraq. He rapidly came to love the Middle East. Quite apart from



Christopher Hohler in Genghis Khan mode, at a medievalists' fancy dress party in the 1960s

the history, the politics and the intrigue, there was ample opportunity for riding good horses and, next best, motorbikes. He began to learn Arabic with a view to joining the diplomatic service after the war.

However, in 1947, in what must have seemed to almost everyone a most unexpected move, he joined the teaching staff of the Courtauld Institute of Art, then newly under the directorship of Anthony Blunt. Until then his direct involvement in art and architecture had been limited to amateur excavation at Notley Priory, and the researches which resulted in his first publication — on Buckinghamshire medieval tile pavements. Neither can have been regarded as in the mainstream of art history, and his introduction to the Courtauld seems to have owed everything to the good offices of Blunt's predecessor, T. S. R. Boase, who taught Hohler at Oxford.

In many respects, the relationship between Hohler and the institute remained anomalous. He refused to put art in the foreground of his thinking or of his teaching. The broader behaviour of people and their cultural and historical circumstances were always his principal field of investigation. Art contributed to our understanding, but it was only a small part of a much larger picture. This was long before the New Art History made study of the social and political context of art fashionable. And yet those for whom Hohler's approach was already congenital, or those who were able to adapt, he was an outstanding mentor who taught by example.

Hohler remained to the end of his life a welcoming host and a tireless correspondent.

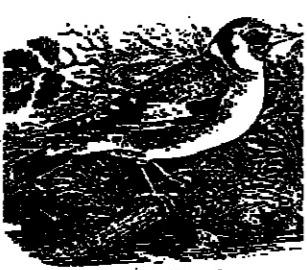
This is one of the reasons that his influence has been out of all proportion to the num-

ber of his publications. He instilled a rigour and intellectual honesty in his pupils which he also demanded of himself, and this did not cease with their graduation, nor upon his retirement in 1979 and subsequent removal to Oslo to be with his second wife Erla (his first marriage having been dissolved in 1961) and their children.

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He is survived by his wife and their two sons and a daughter.

## Nature notes



The goldfinch  
The wild rose bushes, where blackened hips from last year may still hang.

Peacock and small tortoiseshell butterflies are coming out of the shadows in which they hung during the winter.

Frogs are mating in the ponds; the females deposit their numerous eggs on the bottom, where they absorb water and rise to the surface in jelly-like clumps.

DJM

## Church news

## Appointments

The Rev Pat Hemstock, Assistant Curate, Basford St Aldan, to be full-time Priest-in-charge, Basford St Aldan (Southwell).

The Rev Julian Hemstock, Assistant Curate, Basford St Aldan, to be Chaplain's Assistant at Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham (Southwell).

The Rev Dr Richard Henson, Curate (NSM), St Mildred, Lee (Southwark); to be Resident Minister, Dartington (Lichfield).

The Rev Clifford Knight, formerly Chaplain, RAF, permission to officiate diocese of Hereford; to be Priest-in-charge, Brant Broughton and Beckingham w Leadenham and Welbourn (Lincoln).

The Rev Rachel Lewis, Curate, Biddulph w Slaughterford, Castle Combe, Nettleton, West Kington and Yatton Keynell, and Priest-in-charge, Grindleton and Leigh Delamere; to be Priest-in-charge, Biddulph, Castle Combe, Grindleton w Leigh Delamere, Netherton, Slaughterford, W King.

DEATHS: Muzio Clementi, pianist and composer, Evesham, 1832; Taras Shevchenko, poet, Ukraine, 1861; Giuseppe Mazzini, Italian patriot, Pisa, 1872; Konstantin Chernenko, General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party 1984-85; Moscow, 1985.

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# THE TIMES TODAY

MONDAY MARCH 10 1997

## NEWS

### Joyriders face harsh jail terms

■ Joyriders and other reckless motorists who kill or maim through dangerous driving will face dramatically increased maximum prison terms under a tough new package of measures to be announced by Michael Howard.

Under the Home Secretary's proposals, joyriders who cause fatal accidents would face up to ten years in jail ..... Page 1

### £50,000 for church anti-abortion fund

■ A proposal by the Catholic Church of Scotland to offer financial help to any pregnant women considering abortion has led to donations of more than £50,000. In launching the appeal, Cardinal Thomas Winning called on anyone facing an unwanted pregnancy "from any ethnic background, of any faith or none, from anywhere, to come to the Archdiocese of Glasgow for assistance" ..... Page 1

### Bitter parting

Defecting MP Sir George Gardiner has told John Major that the Tories were heading for severe defeat — six days before the Prime Minister launches the general election campaign ..... Page 1

### Battle over Scotland

In the upcoming elections, the sharpest fighting between the Tories and the main Opposition will be in Scotland. *The Times* election guide ..... Page 6

### Fight over green

The hamlet of Sunningwell is taking the Diocese of Oxford to court over its decision to sell off glebe land that has become a village green by default. The test case could sort out once and for all what constitutes a village green ..... Page 8

### White fury

The South African Government has been shocked by the fury of white farmers over a Bill making it very difficult for them to evict black workers living on their farms ..... Page 9

### Tirana shaken

The largest military base in southern Albania fell into rebel hands, dealing a serious blow to the Government ..... Page 11

### China's cash ploy

The FBI warned six members of Congress last summer that China planned to funnel illegal campaign contributions to them so as to influence policy ..... Page 12

### Diplomat expelled

Germany has expelled an American diplomat for trying to obtain high-tech economic secrets, in the first such spy case since the Second World War ..... Page 13

### Ashdown defiant

Paddy Ashdown defended the Liberal Democrats' deal with Labour on constitutional reform against claims from some activists that it could cost his party votes ..... Page 7

### Left tunes

Christopher Seed, a left-handed pianist, is seeking a sponsor to build a keyboard to allow a left-handed pianist's stronger hand to play melodies scored for the right hand ..... Pages 5, 21

### Swift rushes to defend his style

■ A suggestion that Graham Swift, last year's Booker Prize winner, had borrowed the storyline of his novel *Last Orders* from William Faulkner's classic *As I Lay Dying*, was refuted by the author. Swift says in *The Times* today: "My novel can, understandably, be compared to Faulkner's but does not stand comparison to it. It's a different book" ..... Pages 1, 3



The Royal Family mark Prince William's confirmation. Seated, from left: Prince Harry, Diana, Princess of Wales, Prince William, the Prince of Wales, and the Queen. Behind, King Constantine, Lady Susan Hussey, Princess Alexandra, Duchess of Westminster, and Lord Romsey. Page 1

## BUSINESS

**Formula One** Bernie Ecclestone, who owns rights to Formula One Grand Prix racing, could become a billionaire under plans to float shares ..... Page 48

**Eurostar coup** Rivalry between British Airways and Richard Branson will intensify after the recruitment of BA's marketing innovator to manage Eurostar ..... Page 48

**Whistleblowing** The main internal whistleblower at Barings before its collapse is bitter at a judgement that will single him out to be banned from the City ..... Page 48

**Business MPs** Parliament will have far fewer MPs with business experience after the election because few entrepreneurs now reckon it is worthwhile becoming a candidate ..... Page 46

**Biblical tales** Katie Mitchell stages a two-part mystery cycle for the RSC in Stratford using the less-famous episodes ..... Page 19

## ARTS

**Melvyn Bragg** "During my adult lifetime poetry readings have gone from an occasional treat to a steady entertainment, with younger poets now routinely referring to them as gigs" ..... Page 18

**French treat** Philippe Decouflé who choreographed the opening and closing ceremonies of the 1992 Olympics brings his hit circus show to the Woking Dance Umbrella festival ..... Page 18

**Bumpy ride** Michael Nyman unveils his Double Concerto for Saxophone and Cello, an experience that is neither subtle nor rewarding for the audience ..... Page 18

**Ancient remains** Alderney has been described as a ship's graveyard. Anjana Ahuja on the mystery of an ancient wreck ..... Page 16

## FEATURES

**League tables** Starting today, an essential guide for every parent by *The Times* education experts on what to look out for — and what to avoid — when choosing a school for your child ..... Pages 14, 15

**Playing around** Ben Elton has graduated from aggressively political comic to happily married man ..... Page 17

**Driving force** A new fuel cell that has been developed in California has raised hopes of a clean source of electricity ..... Page 16

**Racing force** Starting today, an essential guide for every parent by *The Times* education experts on what to look out for — and what to avoid — when choosing a school for your child ..... Page 14, 15

**Motor racing** David Coulthard's Australian win gave the McLaren team their first success since 1993. Damon Hill failed to complete the warm-up lap ..... Page 23

**Football** Fame at last for second division Chesterfield who reached the semi-finals of the FA Cup for the first time by beating Wrexham ..... Page 29

**Rugby union** Wasps regained the leadership of the Courage Clubs Championship from Leicester with a 36-10 win over Gloucester at Loftus Road ..... Page 20

**Athletics** No gold for Britain in the world indoor championships in Paris where Jamie Baulch, a favourite for the 400 metres, and Colin Jackson had to settle for silver ..... Page 26

**Racing** With excitement mounting before this week's National Hunt Festival, jockeys' agents are competing to get their employers on the best horses ..... Page 33

**Rugby league** St Helens, holders of the Silk Cup Challenge Cup, won 24-0 at Keighley to reach the semi-finals ..... Page 26

## SPORT

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**TODAY IN THE TIMES GREAT**

**LEAP INTO THE FUTURE**  
A new Super League season beckons  
PAGE 35

**GETTING INTO THE SWING**  
Morag Preston learns how to play golf  
Sport for All PAGE 38

**FAST AND FURIOUS**  
Coulthard wins, Hill flops in Australia  
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**SEASON OF SPORT**

**JUMP START**  
Andrew Longmore on the Cheltenham matchmakers  
PAGE 33

# TIMES SPORT

MONDAY MARCH 10 1997

## CELEBRATIONS ALL ROUND FOR FINAL FOUR IN FA CUP



Wimbledon: Robbie Earle celebrates his team's opening goal in their 2-0 win over Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough

Chelsea: Mark Hughes feels the weight of Frank Sinclair's appreciation after scoring the first goal against Portsmouth

## Fortunes of draw open the door to first-time finalists

By ROB HUGHES, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE FA Cup, by far the oldest competition in football, has ways of conjuring up fresh romance. Yesterday, after seven hours of quarter-final competition drawn out from the morning till night, the draw for the semi-finals took a few seconds at Lancaster Gate to produce this pairing: Wimbledon v Chelsea; Middlesbrough v Chesterfield.

The games, to be played on Sunday, April 13, at venues that will be decided today, pit Wimbledon's home-grown fighters against Chelsea's imported cavaliers. The other match is bound to bring a virgin team to Wembley Stadium in May, because neither Middlesbrough nor, of course, Chesterfield, have reached the FA Cup Final before.

Indeed, what a semi-final it promises to be for Chris Beaumont. A new name to you? He is 31 and has the reputation of a utility player, having served Rochdale and Stockport County before Chesterfield at right back, midfield, winger, and centre forward.

It was Beaumont's goal against Wrexham that put the club from the town with the crooked spire into the hat with Middlesbrough. Beaumont, unheralded thus far in his profession, will now take the field against Juninho and Emerson, Brazilians both, and the ever hungry Fabrizio

Kinnear, admitted: "All the semi-final teams would have liked to have drawn Chesterfield, but if we play as well as we did when we won at Chelsea in the Premiership, then we have half a chance." Half? He foxes, for he knows that Chelsea, imperious though they were in destroying Portsmouth 4-1 yesterday, have not always sustained their concentration for 90 minutes.

At Fratton Park, they did that to supreme effect, and Ruud Gullit enthused that this type of application and quality made a coach very proud. With Juninho and company showing in one semi-final that the best of foreign talent can create movement beyond English imagination, and with Zola et al repeating the act for Chelsea, it is obvious that, wherever they are born, players aspire to Wembley and the Cup of Cups.

But first, in the Wimbleton-Chelsea semi-final, we will witness Kinnear's brand of home-grown, spirited team ethic pitted against Chelsea's collection of international stars. Artisans versus aristocrats, with Sam Hammam and Ken Bates in the stand.

Title race opens, page 28  
Steve McManaman, page 28  
Inspired Chelsea, page 29  
Scottish view, page 31

### QUARTER-FINAL RESULTS

DERBY COUNTY 0	MIDDLESBROUGH 2
Juninho (26), Ravanelli (90)	Attendance 17,587

# Hill's Arrows launch is off and so is Walker

**R**ight, hands up anyone who can hum the theme tune to ITV's new coverage of Formula One? Nope, me neither. Sandwiched between "bumpers" from Texaco, which is sponsoring the coverage, the replacement for Fleetwood Mac's *The Chain* turned out to be just a few bars of anonymous, macho motor racing music. Vroom, vroom.

"Do not adjust your set," Jim Rosenthal said, as the faithful gathered for qualifying in the early hours of Saturday morning. "This," he announced portentously, "is Formula One on ITV." We were off... which is more than could be said for Damon Hill some 25 hours later.

"That's a bitter blow for the man who won last year's world championship," Murray Walker shouted, sensibly

avoiding the sort of funeral dirge that similar drama has brought out in him in the past.

Sensible, because Hill's poor qualifying and eventual non-appearance on the starting grid was a hammer blow for ITV. The bosses who spent so many millions of pounds acquiring the rights to Formula One knew full well that when Hill parked his Arrows car, tens of thousands of us will have parked the remote control and gone to bed.

Which was a shame, because the race — after a sleep-inducing second quarter — was excellent and ITV's coverage distinctly promising. It wasn't quite a new era, but capitalised impressively on the additional manpower (and, of course, wompower) ITV took to Melbourne.

Most of what was wrong with the coverage of the race



MATTHEW BOND  
TV ACTION REPLAY

itself was nothing to do with ITV at all. The computerised statistics went walkabout. In the early parts of the race we had no lap times, split times or a clock on the pit stops. As Walker explained: "What you haven't got, you cannot give."

What they did have, however, was advertisement breaks and they, as expected, got progressively more maddening as the race continued.

With hindsight, we appeared to miss nothing significant at all, which the ITV team knows full well is more to do with

ed, belatedly waking up to the fact that a British driver was about to win the Australian Grand Prix. "Never mind about the tea," seemed a bit rich from a broadcaster that kept breaking off to sell us cars, car insurance and, on Saturday morning at least, the services of a gay chatline.

Alongside him, Martin Brundle made an excellent start, despite an occasional tendency to sound just like Jeremy Hardy, the comedian. He was relaxed, wore his expertise lightly and best of all... he's a really bitter man and more than up for using his commentary position to settle a few recent scores. Top of his personal hate list is Ralf Schumacher, the driver who took over from him at Jordan, closely followed by Heinz-Harald Frentzen.

As Clive James said in the

surprisingly enjoyable curtain-raiser, *The Clive James Formula One Show*, it is the well-paid destiny this season of Frentzen — the man in Damon Hill's Williams seat to be demon king, at least for British racing fans.

All weekend Brundle had been generally suggesting that Frentzen wasn't quite up to the job, culminating in the glee ("he's lost it, he's lost it") that greeted the German's driver's eventual departure from the race.

Giles that Walker — for all his experience — was foolishly dragged into.

Both men were quick to apologise (Walker "gravelingly and unreservedly") once the replay revealed Frentzen's innocence... but by then the damage was done. Hill's reign may be over, but there's no need for a witch-hunt.

MICHAEL UPCHURCH



Baulch, right, is relegated into second place in the 400 metres by Bada. Karube, left, of Japan, finished third

## ATHLETICS

# Britain have to settle for silver service

FROM DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

IN PARIS

BRITISH athletics can look at itself in the mirror today and see almost the image of itself from the Olympic Games in Atlanta last summer. Then the Great Britain team won four silver medals, no gold. Here, in the world indoor championships at the Palais Omnisports, three Britons finished as runners-up, none as a champion.

In six world indoor championships, Britain has produced only three winners. John Regis, Tom McKeon and Yvonne Murray, but there was every reason to suppose that number would be added to here. Jamie Baulch, in the 400 metres, and Steve Smith, in the high jump, both led the world rankings and had been performing consistently, and Colin Jackson, in the 60 metres hurdles, had dominated his qualifying races.

After that I had to hold back," Jackson said. "It takes your focus off the first hurdle second time." At least it was progress for Jackson who, before coming here, had won 17 championship medals, but none since 1994.

Baulch, though he did not false start, suffered from going off too quickly. Leading through 200 metres in 21.30sec, his "split" time was much quicker than when he set the British record of 45.39sec last month. As Baulch slowed in the finishing straight, Sunday Bada, from Nigeria, came past to win in 45.51sec. Baulch recorded 45.62sec.

Bada, 27, benefited from the experience which Baulch lacked. He had been runner-up in the last two world indoor championships, having led until the final kick. This time patience was rewarded.

Baulch, his unbeaten six-race sequence ended, said: "At 150 metres I felt I might have gone too quickly but, once you are committed, you have to keep going."

The British women jumpers performed with credit, led by Hansen. Omitted from the team until she threatened legal action, Hansen set a British record of 14.70 metres and was beaten only by Inna Lajosovskaya, of Russia.

Hansen had said that she did not receive her copy of the British Athletic Federation letter informing athletes that participation in the trials was compulsory. The federation added her to the team only after her solicitor had taken up

her case, noting that, as a professional athlete, she was being denied the right to earn a living.

Speaking for the first time on the subject, Hansen said: "It was partly my fault, but I am not taking the whole blame." She would make sure there was no repetition. "I have learnt my lesson," she said. "I do not want to go through that again."

Rhian Clarke, 19, equalled the British women's pole vault record, jumping 3.90 metres, without making the final, and Jo Wise equalled the British long jump record of 6.70 metres set by Sue Telfer in 1984. Wise missed the medal that her perseverance deserved by one centimetre.

This was Wise's first appearance for Britain in four years, her future in athletics having appeared in jeopardy as she underwent three knee operations. Now she is beginning to fulfil the promise she showed in 1988, when she won the bronze medal at the world junior championships in which Fiona May won the gold for Britain. May won yesterday, now competing for Italy. How Britain could have done with her.

THE closing day of the world indoor championships yesterday will be remembered for extraordinary performances by three athletes (David Powell writes). Wilson Kipketer set his second 800 metres world record in three days. Mary Slaney, 38, was denied a gold medal by an athlete six years her senior and Maria Mutola claimed a third successive women's 800 metres title two weeks after learning of the death of her father.

Bewildering though it was to see Kipketer reduce the record he had set in his heat on Friday by a further 1.29sec, to 1min 42.67sec, it will be the memory of watching Yekaterina Podkopayeva and Slaney, with a combined age of 82, disputing the gold medal like two stubborn middle-aged housewives fighting over a place in the supermarket check-out queue that lingers longest.

Slaney paid the price for leading and was overtaken in the last two strides when the Russian, the oldest athlete in these championships, stole by.

to win by 0.03sec in 4min 51.95sec. Podkopayeva, the oldest world indoor champion when she won in 1993, must have made Linford Christie, 36, here as a BBC analyst, feel young.

Podkopayeva likes Paris. She became the oldest European indoor champion here, at 41, in 1994. She has two sons, 15 and ten, and is in her 22nd year of racing at 1,500 metres. "I am 44 years old and proud about it," she said.

Kipketer's effort can be put



Kipketer: world record

into the same category as Jonathan Edwards's achievement at the outdoor world championships of 1995, when he set world records in the first two rounds of the triple jump. Kipketer was the only athlete to collect a \$50,000 (about £31,000) bonus payment for a world record. Such payments are limited to one per event, so why did Kipketer bother a second time? "As long as I am running, I have to do my best and push myself to the limits," he said.

Mutola was preparing to compete in the Ricoh Tour at Birmingham when she heard that her father had been knocked down by a car while he was out walking. After attending his funeral in Mozambique, she was persuaded by her mother to compete here. "My family wanted me to come here," Mutola said. "My mother said: 'If you stay, it is going to be worse.' The black ribbon was on my chest to remind me of the tragic death of my father. I am glad to have the chance to dedicate this medal to him."

RUGBY LEAGUE: HOLDERS SURGE INTO SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP SEMI-FINALS

## Newlove sweeps Keighley aside

Keighley Cougars ..... 0  
St Helens ..... 24

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

OF SEVERAL leading players unavailable for the Great Britain tour of New Zealand last year, Paul Newlove was probably missed the most. There are few more irrepressible or lethal individuals when it comes to scoring, as Keighley discovered in seeing their Silk Cut Challenge Cup aspirations smothered by the holders yesterday.

The St Helens centre created two tries out of nothing and added one himself as Saints strode into the semi-finals. Newlove, however, was by no means the only candidate for the man-of-the-match award from six attempts.

Keighley, promotion candidates, won well at Halifax in the previous round, but the step up in class against the Super League champions proved too onerous. The whole experience was a frustrating one as St Helens repelled wave after wave of attacks in a display that even satisfied their demanding coach, Shaun McKee. "To nil them was particularly good stuff," McKee said. "It was an encouraging performance from everyone. Paul Newlove

was at the top of his game. Give him a bit of space and he'll destroy anybody."

Newlove withdrew from the Britain tour party with a hamstring injury he sustained in the Premiership final defeat by Wigan last September. The centre has underlined his value many times since his £50,000 move from Bradford in 1995, and yesterday he was back to his imperious best in fashioning St Helens' opening two tries.

The danger appeared to have been dealt with when Wray and Foster both got hold of Newlove, but he got his pass out to Sullivan and Keighley's cover was blown. For the next try by Hammond, Newlove looked to defy gravity in staying on his feet to deliver the scoring pass.

Bullish Bradford ..... 35

ningham posed the home side too many questions with their constant driving and chivvying.

Lee Briers, 18, continues to depute for Robbie Goulding at scrum half with youthful authority. In only his second senior appearance, his organisational skills outshone two successful goal kicks from six attempts.

McNamara calls tune

BRADFORD, fancied to return to Wembley for the second successive year, moved effortlessly into the Silk Cut Challenge Cup rugby league semi-finals with a sixth demolition of Oldham by 38-12.

Steve McNamara landed seven goals from seven attempts and helped to set up several Bradford tries to earn the man-of-the-match award.

Glen Tomlinson, the scrum

half, scored two second-half tries to crown a fine performance and Paul Loughlin, Stuart Spruce, Danny Peacock and Robbie Paul also crossed the Oldham line.

Ledsen reached their fifth successive semi-final with a 32-12 win over Featherstone Rovers yesterday. Salford's 29-10 win at Warrington on Saturday leaves them 80 minutes from a first Wembley appearance since 1969.

British hopes founder in water hazard

NICK FALDO laboured on the practice range after two bad holes in the third round had wrecked his hopes of a second successive US PGA Tour victory in the Doral Open in Miami (a Correspondents' write).

The Masters champion took 75 for a two-under-par aggregate of 214 to fall ten shots behind the American, David Duval, who took a one-stroke lead over Nick Price into the final round yesterday.

Faldo, a winner in Los Angeles last week, dropped two shots at the 13th and went into the water at the finishing hole, which also tripped up Colin Montgomerie and Sandy Lyle. The Scots, however, found most trouble at the 3rd, where they dropped seven shots between them.

Montgomerie rallied to return a score of 73, which left him five under par, but Lyle was unable to recover from a quadruple-bogey after his ball became trapped in the roots of a tree and had to settle for a 78.

Faldo, who will rest at his Orlando base this week before continuing his preparations for the Masters, said: "I didn't swing the club well during the early part of the round."

## Whitelaw leaves best till last

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

overall, three shots off the lead.

Cole played the finest round of the week, an eight-under 64, to be the early clubhouse leader on 279. Then Chapman came to the last green one ahead, only to drop a shot to finish in 67 and be level with Cole.

The South African, one shot off the lead with three holes to play, birdied the 16th with a 25-foot putt and then had a magnificent eagle-three at the 10th.

Russell was leading on ten-under with three to play but bogeyed two holes running.

Final scores, page 34

### SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L U	Conditions Piste Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm) °C Last snow
AUSTRIA Kitzbuhel	5 80	fair varied	art	sun 6 8/3
SI Anton	30 30	soft varied	sun	7 8/3
CANADA Whistler	70 280	good varied	good	fair -2 8/3
FRANCE Alpe d'Huez	105 250	fair varied	slush	sun 0 27/2
Meribel	40 165	fair spring	slush	sun 9 27/2
Val d'Isere	90 200	good varied	slushy	sun 5 6/3
SWITZERLAND Klosters	0 190	good crusty	slush	sun 5 6/3
Wengen	5 90	fair varied	slush	sun 6 6/3
UNITED STATES Vail	195 220	good varied	good	cloud -8 9/3

(Some new snow excellent skiing)

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L = lower slopes. U = upper, adj = artificial.

## Krajicek clinches Rotterdam title

RICHARD KRAJICEK achieved his first success of the year when he beat Daniel Vacek, the unseeded Czech, 7-6, 7-6 to win the Rotterdam world indoor tennis final yesterday. The Dutchman, seeded No 2, played solidly against Vacek, who had beaten Goran Ivanisevic, the No 1 seed, in the semi-final and repeated his 1995 victory in the tournament. Krajicek, who had a knee operation at the end of last year, will improve one place to sixth in the world rankings.

Mark Philippoussis, of Australia, served his way into the final of the Arizona Classic on Saturday to set up a match against Richey Renegar, of the United States. Philippoussis sent 19 aces past Chris Woodruff, of the United States, in a 4-6, 7-6, 6-2 victory in the semi-finals.

□ Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, looking to end ten months without a title, scored a 6-4, 6-2 second-round win over Silvia Farina, of Italy, at the Evert Cup in Indian Wells.

## Westwood triumphs

GOLF: Lee Westwood birdied the final hole to win the Malaysian Open in Kuala Lumpur by two strokes yesterday. The Englishman, ranked sixth on the European Tour, fought off a strong challenge from Larry Barber, of the United States, with a final round of 69, three under par, to finish on 274, 14 under. Barber was left to rue a missed two-foot putt on the 8th.

"Patience was the key word today," Westwood, 23, said. "I started slowly and that is not good in any tournament, but I kept my patience." He bogeyed the 2nd but then registered four birdies, three of them on the back nine. Retief Goosen, of South Africa, finished third on 277 after returning a 65. His aggregate time of 1min



FOOTBALL: FERGUSON'S SELECTION MISJUDGMENT CONTRIBUTES TO UNEXPECTED SETBACK FOR FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP LEADERS

# United's fall opens up title contest

PHOTOGRAPHS: STU FORSTER/ALLSPORT

Sunderland	2
Manchester United	1

By PETER BALL

THE English language has a saying for virtually every occasion. Choosing the right one was the question at Roker Park on Saturday as Sunderland hustled Manchester United to an unexpected defeat. Did it represent the dustcart arriving on cue after United's Lord Mayor's Show against FC Porto — or of pride going before a fall?

Alex Ferguson, the United manager, put up a spirited defence. "There's a price to pay for these big games," he said. "Everyone was in such a high after Wednesday. I expected the backlash a bit."

"It was hard to get them going today. After half an hour, you knew, you were just looking for a spark from one of the players, but it just wasn't there. We just looked dead, couldn't get going at all."

He had a point. Perhaps most telling of all was the lacklustre performance of David May. So authoritative and on the pace on



Kelly has a painful landing after being tackled by McClair but the Sunderland midfield player was smiling at the end

midweek thrashing by Tottenham Hotspur behind them, it proved fatal. Poborsky and Cruyff may just about be all right to bring into a full-strength side against Coventry City at Old Trafford. With Pallister injured and Keane suspended, asking them to take on such a big responsibility at Roker Park was too much.

Poborsky offered little flashes of inspiration, but Cruyff looks out of his depth in the vigorous English game. After ten minutes, Beckham waved Gary Neville down the line and found him with a sweeping free kick. Neville crossed first-time on the run, the sort of inviting centre that Shearer had pounced on with such relish in the European championship last year. Cruyff failed even to make a challenge for it.

With nothing at the front, United had ceded the advantage to Sunderland and how well they took it. Bracewell and Ball winning midfield, where McClair struggled, and the spindly-legged Bridges and

Mullin running at United's back five with enthusiasm as Roker in the spring sunshine.

"It was like a cup-tie," Ferguson said. But it always is at Roker Park. United's understrength side could not cope. Giggs, who had felt his

hamstring injury in the warm-up, stayed on the bench and by the time Cole and Solskjær appeared the game had begun to slip away from United.

The two front players had covered so much ground and

worked so hard on Wednesday, I just didn't think they would give us anything anyway," Ferguson said. But when they arrived they gave more than their replacements.

The consequences may be momentous, giving Sunderland a large step towards safety and opening the title door to Liverpool and maybe Arsenal. Now, if Liverpool win all their remaining games, they will be champions.

"I've had two blets," Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, said afterwards. "That we will stay up and that United will win the Premiership. I think they are both cast-iron certainties."

He may be right but on Saturday, against the odds, suddenly the bet on his own team looked the better.

SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): L Perez — G Heslop, M Vieira, R Ord, D Hubbard — D Kelly, P Strettle (sub: D Williams 20min), K Bell, M Gray — J Mullin, M Bridges (sub C Russell, 74).

MANCHESTER UNITED (4-4-2): P Schmeichel — D Venables, D Ince, D Irvin, D Neville, D Poborsky (sub C Solskjær, 57) — D Beckham (sub Cole, 57)

Referee: P Jones



Mullin, scorer of Sunderland's second goal, outjumps Johnsen

IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

# ARSENAL IN 'GOOD FOOTBALL' SHOCK!

Adams, Vieira, Bergkamp and Wright on Wenger's Highbury revolution

## 'Whatever it takes, I'll do it'

Stuart Pearce - no time for losers



THE ESSENTIAL FOOTBALL MONTHLY  
APRIL ISSUE ON SALE NOW

## Molenaar acts to provide relief from mediocrity

Leeds United ..... 1  
Everton ..... 0

By KEITH PIKE

IN OTHER seasons, a meeting of these sides on FA Cup sixth-round weekend might have been treated as one of the games of the season. This, though, promised little, and delivered as much, save the three points that all but ensure Leeds United's continued membership of the FA Carling Premiership and the defeat that leaves Everton looking ever more anxiously over their shoulders.

That both teams are in what optimistic supporters and stressed managers like to term "a period of transition" is undeniable. Only Carlton Palmer, of Leeds, and the Everton quartet of Southall, Short, Watson and Ferguson started the corresponding fixture 12 months ago, but, for all the excuses, there were enough expensively acquired internationals on sizeable salaries playing on Saturday to have demanded something more than mediocrity.

Even that was beyond some. The Leeds followers cannot have enjoyed watching Yeboah posturing and Rush reduced to the ranks of midfield ball-winners, while Barnby and Unsworth, recent England internationals both, came impressively close to proving that good players can indeed become bad ones overnight. Naturally enough, both managers professed themselves content with their teams, which said something about limited ambitions but perhaps more about the concentration of real talent with those clubs at the business end of the division.

The successes? Martyn, faultless in the Leeds goal, and Palmer, predictably enough, on an occasion made for scufflers. Between them, Wetherall and Molenaar also managed to nullify Ferguson's aerial threat, which is commendable enough if decidedly unconvincing, and Molenaar was negligently allowed enough space to head the decisive

goal, from Bowyer's corner, in the 28th minute.

Martyn, who had earlier saved competently from Ferguson and Phelan, subsequently did so bravely from Branch and, at the death, spectacularly from Speed's header, guaranteeing Leeds their seventh clean sheet in eight league games, their fifth in a row at home and ninth place in the Premiership; admirably numbing statistics that prompted one outbreak of media hysteria. What about Europe, George Graham was asked. "It's either there or the Caribbean," the Leeds manager replied, adding: "You are talking about holidays, aren't you?"

We delivered. An away goal puts us in control of the tie and that is always a source of satisfaction. The pressure is off a little now for the home leg because we don't have to go in search of a goal, we can relax and build at our own pace.

Saturday also brought a decent result and we didn't even play. I can confess now that I did not expect Manchester United to lose at Sunderland. Not because Sunderland are a bad side — their 0-0 draw at Anfield proved that they are difficult opponents — it's just that after the great result in midweek, you could see Manchester United brimming with confidence.

and remember that Sunderland went into the game on the back of a demoralising defeat at home to Tottenham.

It was a nice surprise, then, and there are two issues that the results raise. First, it reiterates what I have said in this column all season, that this year's FA Carling Premiership is wide open because any team can beat any other.

The television money means that every team has some quality players. The top teams, of course, have more, that is why they are at the top, but on their day even the lower teams have enough weapons to hurt anybody, especially if they are as committed as Sunderland clearly are.

My second point is that I believe it confirms what the top teams have found for

LEEDS UNITED (4-4-2): N Martin — R Montano, J Pritchard, Hare — G Hale, C Doherty, P Bowes, L Sharpe — B Deans (sub: C Short).

EVERTON (4-4-2): D Southall — C Short, D P. Rodney, S Bowring, D Watson, D Palmer, E Unsworth, O Stevic, S. G. Sowden, J Arlett — N Barnes, (sub M Branch, 40) D Ferguson.

Referee: M Southgate



Martyn: faultless

## Roker trip confirms that race will go to the wire

STEVE McMANAMAN

After what was a crushing disappointment at Villa Park, the past week could not have been better had we written the script ourselves. OK, I know we were overwhelming favourites against SK Brann — but so were PSV Eindhoven.

My point is that it was a tricky game, especially given the apparent confidence back home that it would be a walkover. Manchester United's performance against Porto didn't help either, because even more was expected from us.

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defeat at Villa, we were widely condemned and the title race was declared over. Manchester United were generally regarded as having it in the bag.

However, even before they lost, I was convinced that it was too early to make predictions like that, and my point was proved even before I had the opportunity to write it. At this stage in the season sides are desperate for points for different reasons and those challenging for the title are under extreme pressures of their own. Points can be dropped anywhere and now it is merely a question of keeping going and keeping your nerve.

Now, a week after the title race was supposedly over, it will be wide open again if we can beat Newcastle this evening and if we do, then I am sure there will still be more twists and turns before the championship is finally decided.

I still think it will go to the wire and I still would not rule Arsenal out. What is important is that we get a result against Newcastle tonight. Defeat would again hand the impetus back to Manchester United and that would be criminally wasteful.

Despite our defeat at Villa Park, I think our form of late has been very good, and that will be important on the run-in. When the pressure is really on — as it will be over the next two months — then you have to rely on instinct and nerve to see you through.

If you are playing well, then that immediately offers confidence and can breed a consistency that is vital. It is what we must find now. To win the title we have to string together a decent run of results and we are confident enough to do that.

We know we have played well recently even though results have not always gone our way. The game against Blackburn was evidence of that. But in Norway we also showed that we have a resilience which could prove important over the forthcoming weeks.

Referee: M Southgate



Lower teams still have the weapons to hurt

## Bergkamp makes Forest pay for negative outlook

Arsenal ..... 2  
Nottingham Forest ..... 0

By BRIAN GLANVILLE

This Bergkamp — did not, as Bassett said, make a difference when he was brought on. But what could he reasonably be expected to do in little more than a quarter of an hour?

With the suspended Ian Wright watching from the press box, Bergkamp carried Arsenal's banner with distinction. He scored both their goals, the second from the penalty spot, and was a trial to Forest's overmanned defence.

Wenger was delighted with him: "Maybe the most consistent game he has played, because there was not only talent, but a fighter. He goes in one to one, puts his foot in. He scored two goals and created a lot of chances. A world-class player, but he shows that he can fight also."

All this despite a gruesome foul on the Holland striker by Forest's Norwegian midfield player Haaland, as early as the eighth minute. Mike Reed, the referee, ungraciously given by Leicester City supporters after that penalty at Chelsea, talked to Haaland like you could say, a Dutch uncle: no immediate booking. Nor did he send him off when Haaland gave away a penalty 11 minutes from time, handling the ball on the ground under pressure from Bergkamp. Haaland, in fact, stayed out of Reed's book until the 72nd minute. Bergkamp himself put the penalty away.

In the event, the counter hardly came at all. Forest's one legitimate strike of any consequence arrived in the nineteenth minute, when Guinan, their substitute, got his head to Pearce's free kick from the left but Keown, ever resourceful, cleared from the line. Just as his own header had earlier been cleared from Forest's.

Forest reportedly have £16 million to spend and they had better start spending it soon if they hope to stay in the FA Carling Premiership. Bassett says they have been trying to buy, but with scant response. Understandably, perhaps, Forest may now be rich, but who wants to step onto a sinking ship?

As the game, in the first half, wore tediously on, you found yourself hoping for an Arsenal goal that might have jolted Forest into sending someone up front beside the lonely Saunders. Nigel Clough has not got the pace to support him, now. Bryan Roy, disappointing Holland international quite overshadowed by his compatriot, Den

Five minutes into the second half, however, Vieira, who had just been off the field for treatment, returned to split Forest's defence with a through-pass and Bergkamp sent his shot inside the far post.

Forest were lucky to escape when first Hughes, then Merson, broke through alone. Crossley saved each time, on the second occasion for a corner. Reed gave a goal kick. "Nobody knew why," a broken Reed?

ARSENAL (3-5-2): J Lukic — A Adams, M Keown, S Marshall, R Ord, D Hubbard — D Kelly, P Strettle (sub: D Williams 20min), K Bell, M Gray — J Mullin, M Bridges (sub C Russell, 74).

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (3-6-1): Pearce, S Chettle, N Jenkins (sub: S German, 67) — D Lytle, C Cooper, A Haaland, S Gemmill, D Phillips, N Clough (sub: B Roy, 73) — D Saunders

Referee: M Read

## Strachan apologises to fans for draw bore

Coventry City ..... 0  
Leicester City ..... 0

By A CORRESPONDENT

GORDON STRACHAN, the Coventry City manager, was blunt in his appraisal of this featureless FA Carling Premiership contest. "It was not a value for money," Strachan said, "and everybody at the club must take the blame for that."

Coventry have garnered a mere four points from their past six matches. Darren Huckerby, as often, caused some early problems for the visitors but it was an uphill struggle. Leicester will feel that they are one point closer to survival, now only five short of the 42 that Martin O'Neill, their inauspicious manager, identified as required to stay in the Premiership.

O'Neill, whose team defended resolutely and were marginally the better side, said: "I thought we passed the ball around well at times without having the cutting edge but that's another important point for us."

Points of interest in a match of commitment and energy, but lacking in skill, were few and far between. Taylor, the Leicester substitute, had the two best chances to score for his team, but was profligate. Keller, the United States international, made his customary series of good saves.

Strachan admitted that he had brought John Salako back from injury too soon. Salako was substituted 24 minutes after being brought on at half-time.

Salako was less than thrilled and was away from Highfield Road within 15 minutes of the final whistle. The majority of the 19,220 crowd must have wished that they had departed as quickly.

Despite his poor showing, Strachan was given a standing ovation by the home fans. "They deserved it," he said. "They deserved it."

AT 7.15

Match

Bitter

Fever

Taste

Pain

Joy

Hurt

Grief

Grief

Grief

Grief

Grief

Grief

Grief

Grief

Grief&lt;/div

FOOTBALL: PREMIERSHIP SIDE DISPLAYS CLASS AND COMPOSURE TO ACCOUNT FOR UNDERDOGS AND REACH FA CUP SEMI-FINALS

# Hughes excels as Chelsea coast past Portsmouth

**Portsmouth** ..... 1  
**Chelsea** ..... 4

By ROB HUGHES  
 FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

**CHELSEA** silenced the Pompey Chimes at Fratton Park yesterday luncheon, winning by a score, and with a composition that spelled class. Portsmouth may have been able to travel to Elland Road in the fifth round of the FA Cup and outplay Leeds United, but they were never anything but pretenders to Chelsea's vast superiority in the quarter-final.

The goals, from Mark Hughes, from Wise — who scored twice — and, of course, from Zola, were simply marks for the skill that overwhelmed the Nationwide League first division side. In return, though Portsmouth were allowed to mark in an altogether different way, were given licence to kick shins black and blue, they never left the desired imprint on the Fulham Road aristocracy. Nor, indeed, did the supposed ability of Terry Venables, the Portsmouth owner, to bemuse a more talented team with tactics, prove anything more than an empty notion.

We should be grateful. It is one thing to travel to an FA Cup tie in hope of romance, of the lesser club beating the greater one by dint of effort and application. It is another to allow talents of imagination to be bludgeoned in the name of English cup fare.

Rud Gullit, himself on crutches, asked his centre forward, Mark Hughes, afterwards: "What have you done to these players for ten years?"

They had Leboeuf, shaven-

Why do they want to kick you like this?"

Gullit, proud of the way that his sometimes distracted team concentrated for the full 90 minutes, later said: "Mark may have calves that are very big, but that doesn't mean you can kick them whenever you want. It is good to see a player like him, still hungry, setting a good example for the team. I knew exactly how Portsmouth would play, and we knew that if we continued to use one

head and sleek in possession, as a spare defender whose class looked apart from all else. With similar styles the teams fenced, but while Leboeuf engineered Chelsea's offside trap to perfection, there was no equivalent brain in Portsmouth blue.

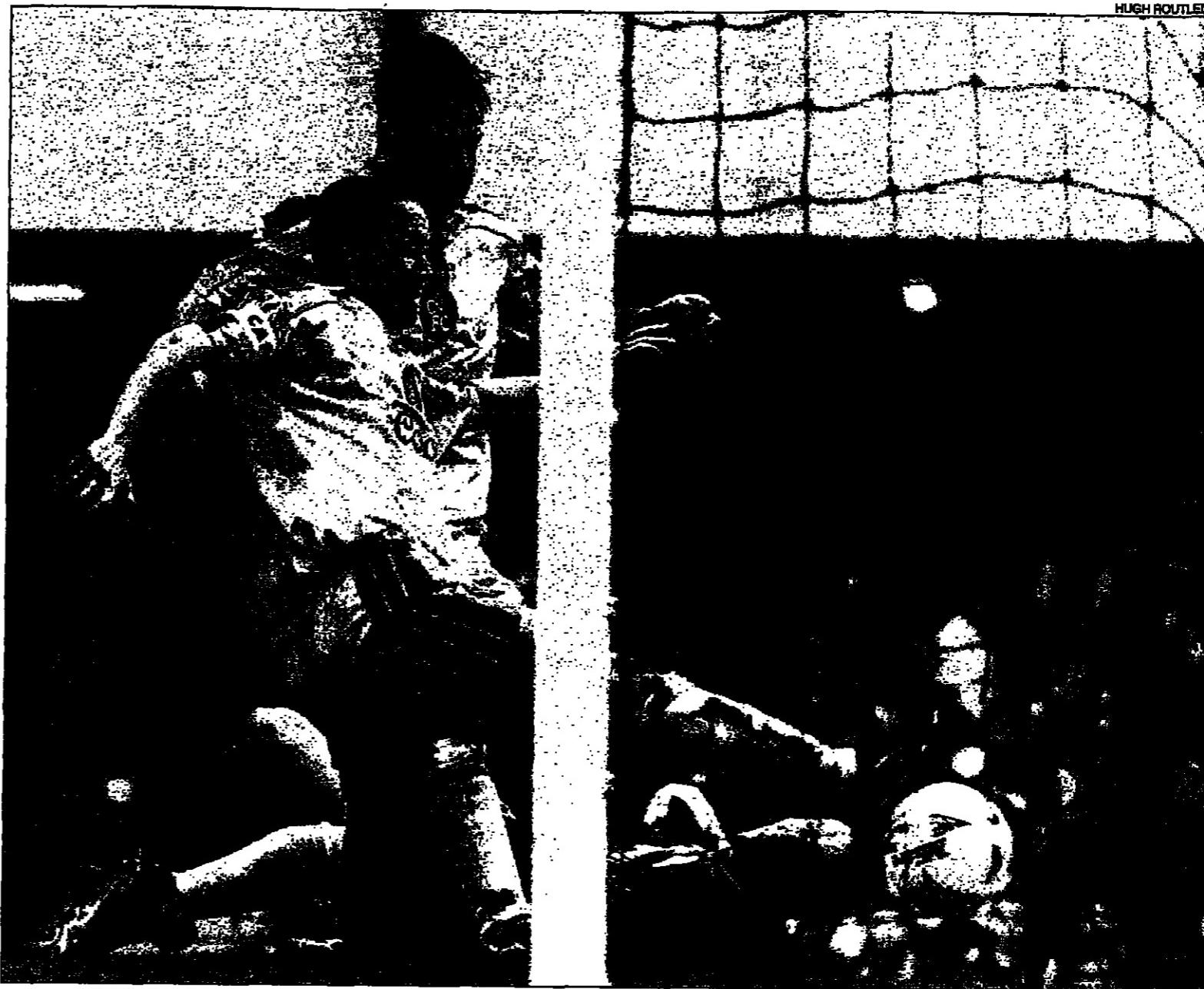
Up front it was the movement of Chelsea, the international awareness that time and again eluded Portsmouth. Zola would simply not be marked. He took up positions 20 yards behind Hughes; he darted here and there, his touch was ever true, but he had missed an opportunity after 17 minutes, allowing Knight, playing his 78th game for Portsmouth, to block bravely at his feet.

Nevertheless, movement and thought would eventually take Portsmouth apart. Di Matteo chipped the ball down the centre, Perrett, a lumbering centre half who wasted few opportunities to hack at Hughes, misjudged the flight, and Hughes, unquestionably still the best centre forward of his type, delayed his run, allowed the ball to bounce, and watched Knight come towards him. Then, with venom, with absolute certainty, he swung his right foot and dispatched the ball past the stranded goalkeeper.

That was the 25th minute. Class had told — would Chelsea's concentration? They were being buffeted: Svensson kicked Leboeuf, Perrett was horribly late with a tackle on Hughes. There had been nothing by way of reprisal in Portsmouth's attacks when, two minutes from half-time, Chelsea effectively settled the unequal match.

It took 25 minutes for Hughes to strike. Before then, with the sea mist rolling in and the old stands of Fratton Park shaking with raucous expectation, Chelsea had gradually silenced the home support.

They had Leboeuf, shaven-



Knight is helpless as Wise applies the finishing touch to put Chelsea 2-0 ahead against Portsmouth at Fratton Park yesterday

Zola stood over the ball for a free kick two yards outside the penalty box. Portsmouth waited in fear of the shot, so the Italian chipped the ball towards the far post in a rehearsed move. Clarke was unmarked and, though his header was pushed away by Knight, Clarke was quick to the rebound. The ball would have gone in from him had Wise not nipped forward to

complete its movement over the line.

Portsmouth did attempt a tactical reshuffle. They came out after the break in a Dutch 3-4-3 formation, with Hall up alongside Bradbury and Svensson. Fleetingly it aroused the home support, but after Grodias had scampered to beat Hall to the ball, Chelsea suddenly broke to

Hughes began the momentum on the right. Di Matteo then linked with Zola, the first Italian cushioning the ball before releasing it, the second sidefooting it past Knight. Zola's final touch was an easy, incisive, rapier's thrust.

On spirit alone did Portsmouth come back. Seven minutes from time they broke the length of the field. Simpson ran alertly for Awford's clear-

ance controlled the ball and put it into the path of Burton, who from 13 yards claimed the consolation goal. But that was all it was.

Three minutes later, though Knight had already made a superlative stop from Burley, the goalkeeper misclicked a clearance straight to Wise.

From Wise to Hughes, and back to Wise again the ball was played until, with con-

summate ease, Wise scored. "Can we play you every week?" the Chelsea fans chorused, but they are a stride away from Wembley.

**PORTSMOUTH** (4-1-2): A Knight — A Tait, D Hall, D Bradbury, M Svensson (sub: D Purdon, 60), C. Perrett, P Grodias, P Shiel, F Leboeuf (sub: Johnson, 77), S Clarke — D Petrescu, R Di Matteo (sub: C Burley, 62), D Wise, P Hughes, S Minty — G Zola, M Hughes. Referee: J Winter

Referee: J Winter

## Middlesbrough's cups runneth over as Ravanello sees the light

**Derby County** ..... 0  
**Middlesbrough** ..... 2

By MICHAEL HENDERSON

AT THE end of this abrasive, often unsightly FA Cup tie, there was a rare shaft of light. Ravanello, who had spent most of the afternoon behaving like a stage Italian, took Juninho's pass on the left side of the Derby County penalty area and struck a shot like an arrow beyond the blameless Taylor. It was an excellent goal and confirmed Middlesbrough's place, for the first time, in the semi-finals of the FA Cup.

But, as their fans sang about going to Wembley twice, Bryan Robson might wish to trade in some of their Cup form for league points. Their position at the bottom of the FA Carling Premiership offers a more revealing portrait of the side and a fairer reflection of his ability as a manager. They are not too good to go down, and the more the two Cups occupy their attention, the greater will be the distraction from the relegation fight.

There was not much football at the Baseball Ground and



Juninho: full of grace

Hignett and slipping a left-footed shot beyond Taylor. He conferred on the game what grace it had.

In a different way Pearson, the Middlesbrough captain, proved no less important. Together with Festa, the Italian, he provided a defensive bulwark in front of Roberts, whose saves of note were few.

Pearson is one of those "solid" professionals who turn up on time, get on with the job without complaint, and rarely feature in headlines. Some of his more pampered teammates, and one or two mad boys elsewhere, could perhaps remember sometimes those who also serve.

The early skirmishes were grubby, ugly, even. After Ravanello was booked for a late challenge that left Chris Powell grounded, Mr Poll added the names of three Derby men, Carsley, Flynn and Ward, all before the twentieth minute. There was anger in the air, and the match suffered, though, in making chances for Beck, Ravanello and Juninho. Middlesbrough retained the clearer heads.

In view of what had gone on before, Juninho's 38th minute goal was a little gem. Breaking

from midfield with those "quick feet" football people like to talk about, he made and scored a goal of pure craft. It made Derby's more direct methods look rather banal, and their methods did not alter greatly.

Asanovic remained their best hope of a goal, not least from set pieces. Roberts shovelled a first-half free kick round the post and watched another kick in the second half, clear his crossbar. Ward might have scored from open play but Festa closed him down as he shot. Slog away as they did Derby never threatened Middlesbrough again.

With time running out,

Ravanello roamed from right to left, accepted Juninho's nice little pass and scored in the grand manner, like a man who has no doubts. This was Derby's last Cup tie at their evocative, now thoroughly ramshackle ground. They will not recall it with joy.

**DERBY COUNTY** (4-3-3): M Taylor — L Carsley, I Somer, C Daily, C Power — S Flynn (sub: G Stewart, 45min), P Taylor, D Pearson, C Festa, G Beck, R Ward, A Asanovic

**MIDDLESBROUGH** (4-4-2): B Roberts — C Pearson, H Peacock, G Beck, C Blackmore — P Stump, C Hignett, R Misicka, Juninho — M Beck, F Ravanello

Referee: G Poll

## Wimbledon's virtues prevail as Wednesday are eliminated

**Sheffield Wednesday** ..... 0  
**Wimbledon** ..... 2

By DAVID MADDOCK

IT IS time, once and for all, to put aside this nonsense of Wimbledon being ramshackle underdogs with a spirit of amateur abandon. If this ultimately comprehensive FA Cup quarter-final victory over Sheffield Wednesday has proved anything, it is the sheer professionalism of the club these days.

In Joe Kinnear they have a wily manager with a keen sense of direction. Their league position is evidence enough of their quality. What

Wimbledon do not have is a strength in depth to win the FA Carling Premiership, but Kinnear knows they can win a cup, and in recent weeks he has clearly pursued that ambition to the detriment of all other objectives.

The next ten minutes decided the game. Hirst, a first-half substitute, was the Sheffield club's one creative influence of note and as he found a persuasive rhythm — conjured up from the depths of discontent at his original omission perhaps — Wednesday finally created chances.

too powerful, too determined and simply too good for their surprisingly subdued opponents.

From the early moments of the tie, a sneaking suspicion was aroused that Wimbledon would lose only if they were careless enough to allow Wednesday to escape their performance. Did not deserve. Wimbledon dominated and created enough chances to have won the match three times over before their opponents gained even a corner.

That Wimbledon did not

take one of those chances until the 74th minute at least made

a contest of it.

No fewer than six presentable opportunities were denied by the hour, notably by the forwards, Gayle and Ekoku. Wednesday, on the ropes, were not dispatched and began to sense the potential for a knockout blow.

The next ten minutes decided the game. Hirst, a first-half substitute, was the Sheffield club's one creative influence of note and as he found a persuasive rhythm — conjured up from the depths of discontent at his original omission perhaps — Wednesday finally created chances.

There were two glorious opportunities, both woefully spurned. First, after 65 minutes Hirst ran 50 yards into the penalty area and rolled the ball into Booth's path with the goal gaping. But Booth missed.

Five minutes later and Wednesday committed a crime that would not go unpunished. This time Hirst took the ball in midfield and curled a delicious pass to Carbone, who produced a similar sense of adventure to find Whittemore inside the penalty area. He did everything right by coolly beating a defender to find space, but then sent the ball the wrong side of the upright.

It was Robbie Earle, fittingly, who did the punishing. Earle is the Carling Player of the Month, has scored in every round of this competition so far, and at 32 has even forced himself into the England picture.

Sixteen minutes from the end he raced onto Gayle's intelligent flick on the edge of the penalty area and smashed

the ball joyfully into the roof of the net.

There was no coming back for Wednesday, who could perhaps claim that the first half loss of Newsome and Hyde with serious leg injuries, helped their cause not one jot. In the final seconds, Holdsworth, a Wimbledon substitute, was found in space by the impressive Leonhardsen and he finished well.

The south London club must now face Chelsea in the semi-final and it will certainly be a sterner test than this. But as Earle said afterwards: "When you have beaten Manchester United in this competition, you are afraid of no one." These days it is Wimbledon who make opponents afraid.

**SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY** (4-4-2): K Pressman — S Nicol, J Newson (sub: R Humphreys), G Stewart, D Hall, D Atherton, M Pembroke — P Atherton, G Higginson (sub: D Hockley, 36), P Atherton, M Pembroke — P Atherton, Booth

**WIMBLEDON** (4-4-2): N Sultan — K O'Connor, C Price, D Blackwell, A Kinnear — N Ardley, V Jones, R Earle, O Leonhardt — E Blakely (sub: D Hobson, 86), M Gayle (sub: G McAllister, 86)

Referee: I Dilks

## Sunday service provides mass appeal at Saltergate

Mark Hodkinson on the uplifting nature of Chesterfield's 1-0 win over Wrexham

the ken of Chesterfield's blood-and-thunder approach. Ward, in midfield was particularly outstanding, piecing moves together from just beyond the centre circle, but for all Wrexham's possession, they did not create any gilded opportunities.

Before the teams took to the pitch the Chesterfield club song, recorded to celebrate their FA Cup run, was played. There is a tacit ruling that a club's success shall be proportional to the gaudiness of its official song. If the Wrexham team had heard We Can Build Our Dreams they might have barricaded themselves into their dressing-room, such was its sputtering banality.

Much had been made of two teams from the Nationwide League second division reaching an FA Cup quarter-final, but this was in fact a game typical of the division from which it would usually emanate.

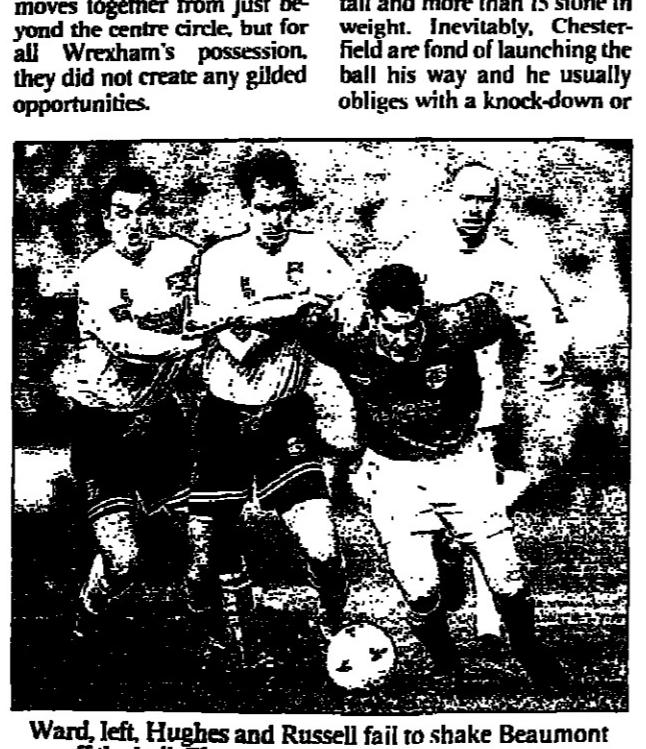
Wrexham were by far the better side in the first half and suggested they would be the more becoming ambassadors of their division. Their football was neat and thoughtful and for a good while beyond

barnstorming run towards goal.

One hopeful lob collided with Morris's shin and bounced into the path of Beaumont. Elbows and knees were set in motion as Beaumont tussled for the ball with Brace. The defender held his territory for a second or two and besieged his goalkeeper, Marriott, to come forward and collect. Marriott stayed still, Beaumont seized the moment and lifted it over his head. It was, one imagined, the kind of goal that is seen regularly at Saltergate.

Wrexham pressed forward but their play was fractured, made desperate by the situation. Chesterfield fans danced on the rooftops around the ground and the sun broke free of the haze to bathe the small ground. A pitch invasion was almost mandatory and it duly arrived. Players were held aloft, fans jiggled on the turf, and it was difficult to remain unmoved by the unbridled joy arriving unexpectedly in a small town in the middle of England.

"The draw for the semi-final of the FA Cup will be made later today," the man on the public-address system said. Then, after a short pause, he added, almost as if he were



Ward, left, Hughes and Russell fail to shake Beaumont off the ball. Photograph: Mike Egerton / Empics

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CARLING

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FOOTBALL

SUNDAY

MARCH 9

1997

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16 Notts County 16 0 13 0 2 9 5 3 2 5 15 46

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18 Macclesfield 14 0 15 0 2 7 5 3 2 3 15 44

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20 Stevenage 12 0 17 0 2 5 5 3 2 1 15 42

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36 Stevenage 0 0 33 0 2 0 5 3 2 0 15 26

37 Hartlepool 0 0 34 0 2 0 5 3 2 0 15 25

38 Walsall 0 0 35 0 2 0 5 3 2 0 15 24

39 Leyton Orient 0 0 36 0 2 0 5 3 2 0 15 23

40 Notts County 0 0 37 0 2 0 5 3 2 0 15 22

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Booking rides is a cutthroat business. Andrew Longmore on a race with few rules

## Special agents who must know the form

**W**hen the clapperboard clicks and the action finally rolls tomorrow afternoon, the two men who have done most to shape the Cheltenham Festival this year will sigh with relief and bury their heads in the form for the meetings at Lingfield and Uttoxeter on Saturday. Barring the odd last-minute hitch, their jobs are done, their jockeys installed and only the praise or the recriminations lie ahead. "The last two weeks have been a nightmare," Robert Parsons said. "To be honest, I've had enough of Cheltenham."

Parsons is agent for Richard Dunwoody, which makes him public enemy No 1 in the weighing-room. Dunwoody's statue as a jockey and his lust for winners find expression in



Parsons's relentless quest for the best rides. Together they test the allegiance of owners and trainers to their jockeys in a way once considered ungentlemanly. At Cheltenham, when the prizes are so much greater, the competition is cutthroat.

"You can be changing next to someone every day, be perfectly pleasant and know damn well that he's been trying to nick your rides that morning," Jamie Osborne, one of the few top jockeys who does not employ an agent, said. "But it's accepted now. There are a lot more freelance jockeys, so if you don't try to get the rides, someone else will."

Two weeks ago, Dave Roberts was putting the finishing touches to a handsome Festival portfolio for Adrian Maguire. The following morning he was ringing trainers to offer substitutes after Maguire had been ruled out of Cheltenham for the third year in succession by a broken arm. His rivals sensed a field day.

Roberts runs the most formidable stable of jump jockeys in the country from behind a desk in an elegant town house on the borders of Reigate and Redhill in Surrey. His tally of winners for the season stands at just over 550; he once booked 17 winners in a day.

Tony McCoy, the champion, Norman Williamson, Richard Johnson and Mick Fitzgerald are all his and an annual phone bill of £7,000 is proof of



Roberts represents a strong team, including McCoy, Maguire, Williamson and Fitzgerald. "You feel responsible for every ride they're on"

the value he gives for his ten per cent.

Maguire's injury released a host of prized rides for David Nicholson onto the open market and the task of filling them was complicated by the fact that no one wanted to be seen to profit too hastily from the popular Irishman's misfortune. That night, Roberts rang Nicholson to clear up the rides for the following day. They talked loosely of Cheltenham, but agreed to talk again in more detail the next day.

The "Duke", as he is universally known, is not someone to be messed with. No amount of badgering will persuade him to change his mind. Just the opposite, in fact. Roberts knew his man and played it cool, which is one of the hidden skills of the agent.

But Nicholson acted fast. By 8.30 that night, he had rung Parsons to offer Dunwoody, his former stable jockey, the plum rides on Mulligan in the Guinness Arkle Trophy and Viking Flagship in the Queen Mother Champion Chase. It was not that easy. Dunwoody was committed to riding Caleate for Charlie Mann in the Arkle. Parsons did not have to consult his precious *Timeform*

ratings nor Dunwoody to know which was the better ride. He rang Mann.

"It was a very difficult situation," Parsons said. "If Charlie had stood his ground and been adamant that Richard would not get off his horse, then we might have had to reconsider. But he said he was

disappointed, in pretty strong terms, and that was it. I just have to be as diplomatic as possible, but I get some terrible abuse sometimes."

The ultimate threat is that a trainer will never use a jockey's services again. Sometimes there is no solution. Choosing to ride One Man at Ascot recently

angered the connections of Sound Man, another of Dunwoody's regular rides.

From his isolated cottage in Lambourn, Osborne had also sent an overnight fax to Nicholson detailing his own availability and was rewarded with the ride on L'Opera on the Triumph Hurdle. Another

agent was not so lucky. He called late at night and received the full force of the Duke's notoriously short temper. Roberts was disappointed not to get McCoy on Viking Flagship and Williamson on Mulligan, pleased that the talented Johnson had picked up some good rides as Nicholson's No 2 stable jockey.

Tony had won on Viking

Flagship at Aintree and Norman has ridden winners at the Festival for the owners of Mulligan, but you just have to take it on the chin. "I'll never say to a trainer: 'My jockey must ride this,' I'll just say 'X is available'. You have to see a jockey fall because next time it could be one of yours, but when you hear a jockey might be out for a week, it's your job to ring up and get on his rides. Robert was not out of order, it's business."

There aren't many rules.

You've got to be aware of what's going on. Certain trainers won't use certain jockeys and there's no point in ringing them up because you'll just get their backs up. You get to know a trainer's way of doing things. Ninety per cent of people in racing are pretty loyal. If a jockey has won on a spare ride, 95 per cent of the



Parsons has maintained a relentless quest for the best rides for Dunwoody

## Homework suggests Istabraq will provide correct answer

BY OUR IRISH RACING CORRESPONDENT

THERE is no mistaking Irish confidence going into the Cheltenham Festival, although it may be asking too much for a repeat of last year's record-equalling seven winners when Wither Or Which and Elegant Lord shone out as bankers. This time there are no such beacons to guide backers, but any number of Irish horses have the potential to impress as stars.

The closest to an Irish banker will be Istabraq in the Royal SunAlliance Hurdle, despite his warm-up victory at Leopardstown raising as many questions as it answered. A neck defeat of his tenderly ridden stable companion, Finnegan's Hollow, coupled with some slow jumping, impressed few. However, a more impressive Istabraq is expected to be on view on Wednesday.

His homework has reportedly thrilled connections since Leopardstown and Charlie Swan, who has twice won the Sun Alliance, will not hear of him being beaten. As for his jumping, expect Istabraq to be much better with a guaranteed fast pace to concentrate his mind. Aidan O'Brien's horse is hard to oppose.

Swan has an excellent chance of winning his first Champion Hurdle on a horse whose quality has also yet to be fully appreciated. I'm Supposin is the latest high-class flat horse to make the leap to possible Champion Hurdle glory, but few can have shown such a natural aptitude for hurdling. Kevin Prendergast's charge schooled brilliantly from the start and his two successes in novice company were exhibitions of poise and accuracy.



Prendergast enthusiasm

In January and, on that form, will be fancied for the Citroen Supreme Novices' Hurdle. However, he is worth opposing. A horse who has broken blood vessels is not one to depend upon the final hill.

A better each-way option may be Graphic Equaliser, trained by Frank Lacy.

On tomorrow's opening day, the other Irish horse to keep an eye on is Miltonfield in the concluding Hamlet Cigars Gold Card final. Never one to win by too far, the Irish

## POINT-TO-POINT RESULTS

AVON VALE (Bury Castle) Mdn 1, Sultan Of Swing (Miss P Curing) 9-4 fav, 2 Cape Henry, 3. Lovem 15 ran Hunt, 1 Gl Hayes, Pomona, 4. Mr Dancer, 5. Mr Dancer, 6. Mr Dancer, 7. Mr Dancer, 8. Mr Dancer, 9. Mr Dancer, 10. Mr Dancer, 11. Mr Dancer, 12. Mr Dancer, 13. Mr Dancer, 14. Mr Dancer, 15. Mr Dancer, 16. Mr Dancer, 17. Mr Dancer, 18. Mr Dancer, 19. Mr Dancer, 20. Mr Dancer, 21. Mr Dancer, 22. Mr Dancer, 23. Mr Dancer, 24. Mr Dancer, 25. Mr Dancer, 26. Mr Dancer, 27. Mr Dancer, 28. Mr Dancer, 29. Mr Dancer, 30. Mr Dancer, 31. Mr Dancer, 32. Mr Dancer, 33. Mr Dancer, 34. Mr Dancer, 35. Mr Dancer, 36. Mr Dancer, 37. Mr Dancer, 38. Mr Dancer, 39. Mr Dancer, 40. Mr Dancer, 41. Mr Dancer, 42. Mr Dancer, 43. Mr Dancer, 44. Mr Dancer, 45. Mr Dancer, 46. Mr Dancer, 47. Mr Dancer, 48. Mr Dancer, 49. Mr Dancer, 50. Mr Dancer, 51. Mr Dancer, 52. Mr Dancer, 53. Mr Dancer, 54. Mr Dancer, 55. Mr Dancer, 56. Mr Dancer, 57. Mr Dancer, 58. Mr Dancer, 59. Mr Dancer, 60. Mr Dancer, 61. Mr Dancer, 62. 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## Essex girls provide a crucial test of new man

By A CORRESPONDENT

WHILE women referees are steadily infiltrating men's professional football — Wendy Toms, for instance, regularly runs the line in Nationwide League matches and takes charge of Vauxhall Conference fixtures — so male umpires are increasingly evident on the netball court.

Indeed, the key English Inter-Counties League encounter last week between Bedfordshire and Essex Metropolitan was umpired by a man, Dickon Adams. It also served as an "access test" for Adams, part of his assessment before possible appointment as only England's fifth international umpire. Coincidentally, or perhaps significantly, one of the present quartet is also male, Bill Alexander.

International umpiring is a prestigious role involving plenty of air miles. Alexander and his three English female counterparts are hoping to land a plum assignment in May, when New Zealand play host to an international series against Jamaica. Adams could provide extra competition.

New Zealand are pencilled in for a series in England in early November, when they will play three internationals against Liz Broome's hosts. The South Africans, hosts to England in the summer, were originally mooted to tour in the autumn but New Zealand — ranked third behind South Africa and above England — will prove exciting and exacting understudies guaranteed to attract television and pack arenas.

Fiona Murtagh, the England captain, who also leads Essex Metropolitan, found herself facing her national predecessor, Kendra Slawinski, who captains Bedfordshire. Slawinski's team prevailed 41-38, leaving Bedfordshire topping a table dominated by Essex Met in recent seasons. The final round of Inter-Counties League matches, on April 12, will decide if they can stay there.

**Christopher Irvine begins a three-part series on the changing face of rugby league**

# Bullish marketing breaks Bradford mould



**A**ccording to geologists, the natural bowl at Odsal was gouged out during the fourth Ice Age. On a wretched morning, some permafrost apparently lingers. The former quarry at the top of the Mb66 has been a place of rugby league pilgrimage since Bradford Northern moved there in 1934. Nowadays, it is the epicentre of a new phenomenon, the loud, proud and conspicuously successful Bradford Bulls.

Weather permitting on Friday, Bradford will kick off a new rugby league summer at home to Warrington in the Stones Super League. Television cameramen need no reminding of the meteorological perils that can cause Odsal to fill up with fog whatever the time of year. More than one live broadcast has been disrupted. Last season, snow fell there on the opening day.

The biggest change to the place is not physical. No right-thinking person would have imagined 18 months ago that Bradford would be trendsetters. Fashion began and ended at a bobble hat and scarf; the hip place was where supporters might best make the referee hear the cry of "Gerrymander". The reason the profile of the average Bradford supporter has changed from a male over 40 to a young mother is straightforward. "It's about fun," Peter Deakin explained.

To those who see the word fun as heretical in sport, Deakin, the foremost example of a new breed of marketing



Deakin's approach has prompted a huge rise in Bradford's attendances and in merchandising revenue. Photograph: John Houlihan

executive in rugby league, is unapologetic. "We epitomise what Super League is all about — vibrant, young, glitzy," he said. "It's what some critics pompously think sport shouldn't be about. Why, then, have we doubled our crowds? We're as serious as any sports club in this country, but there has to be a sense of style."

Clichéd images of cloth caps and chimney-sweaks were always ridiculously overplayed. But in replacing Northern with Bulls, Bradford addressed their main concern: a dying audience. Naturally, it offended certain sensibilities and drove some older supporters away, but their numbers have been replaced several-fold, mainly by fam-

ilies. It is a conversion that has its roots in popular appeal. Stick-in-the-mud Bradford are suddenly the go-getters that others seek to imitate.

Deakin said: "My acid test was the retired schoolteacher who came to see me after the final game last season. She and her late husband were die-hard Northern supporters. She said she hated me, the new name, thought that music at matches would be corny, and summer rugby daft. Now she said she was a Bulls fanatic and asked what on earth she'd do without matches for five months."

Bradford sought a niche market between the choreographed audience participation at ice hockey and the

numbers and atmosphere in football. When Deakin arrived at Bradford in 1995, after a five-year spell marketing different sports in the United States, he held up the Chicago Bulls basketball team as an example to follow. While some people laughed, Deakin and his team began to deliver. Club merchandise sales leapt from £70,000 to £500,000 last year.

Average home crowds increased from 4,400 to 10,350 last season; the target this year is 12,500. In the close season, 2,000 subscribed to a

new fan club. "Let's not kid ourselves that a lot of these new people understand rugby league," Deakin said. "They come because others have told them they've had a great time here. The first trick is to get people into your sport but the next is to get them to understand the culture of rugby league, so they become a follower for life."

Deakin, 43, talks of "positive mindset" and "repositioning the image stand-point", but the marketing jargon sits comfortably with the naturally upbeat patter of the former policeman in nearby Brighouse and forward with Oldham. He has wooed blue-chip sponsors and convinced a sceptical public that league can be fashionable.

Which other club would get so many applications to be cheerleaders that it now wants to set up a dance school?

There are important lessons for the sport. "The Bulls are merely a vehicle for the promotion of rugby league," Deakin said. "We have to sell the sport as well as the club, because there is still so much ignorance about league out there. The sport has always short-changed itself. It has to start trusting and believing, because the game is a fantastic product."

Deakin is taking what he calls the "Manchester United approach". That means promoting league as the main summer sport in England and Bradford as the "nation's

team". Supporters are starting to come from as far as Scotland and Wales. Robbie Paul, the Bulls' young captain from New Zealand, is Deakin's key card. His effin adorns all Bradford's publicity. "Chicago Bulls have Michael Jordan, Man United have Ryan Giggs and we've Robbie," he said. "The kid has got film-star status in this city."

Each Bradford player has his responsibilities in community and development work. The onus is on a caring approach. Paul's brief is the anti-drugs message in schools. Unless they wanted frostbite, no youngster used to hang around Odsal. Now the place is alive with autograph-hunters. It is an appeal dramatic than can be ex-

**'We have to sell the sport as well as the club'**

plained by an uplift in playing fortunes, or by a simple name change.

"Winning is everything for the coach and players, but if we suffer a significant loss, our fans don't desert us in droves because there's another reason for them to come," Deakin said. "Too often loyalty is taken for granted in British sport. Here we try to communicate with supporters, make them feel part and parcel of the club. The bottom line is fun."

If the fun is to continue at Bradford, then the development of Odsal, at a modest cost of £9 million now that overambitious plans for a "superdome" appear to be doomed, must begin next year. Corporate hospitality does not go down so well in Portakabins. In the meantime, Deakin will assemble his jugglers, fire-eaters, clowns, singers and face-painters and trust that Friday night remains fog, frost and snow free.

### EXCLUSIVE TIMES NEWSPAPERS GRAND PRIX COMPETITION

# £40,000 TO BE WON PLAY FANTASY FORMULA ONE TODAY



The race for our £40,000 Fantasy Formula One prizes went live yesterday with the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne. The top prize of £25,000, in association with the Marlboro World Championship Team, will go to the manager of the team which heads our leaderboard after the final race of the season, the European Grand Prix at Estoril, Portugal, on October 26. Full results of the race will appear on Friday.

For your chance to win a share of our £40,000 prize fund all you have to do is choose six racing drivers and six constructors from the groups below. If you haven't already registered a team the lines are open until noon on Thursday,

March 27 to enter to play before the Brazilian Grand Prix in Interlagos on March 30 — the first of six races which carry up to 600 bonus points for the team managers who can correctly predict any of the first three drivers to cross the finishing line. You can also enter by fax or post. And, starting today, you can also strengthen your team using our transfer lines which are described below.

Jerry Meredith of Portlaoise, Republic of Ireland, wins our pre-season £1,000 draw. Mrs C Austin, Sunbury, Middlesex and G Smith of West Lothian, each win a Sony PlayStation and Porsche Challenge and Formula One CD-Rom games.

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



#### THE SCORING SYSTEM

**DRIVERS** For each lap completed: 1 point. Finishing position: 1st 60 points; 2nd 50; 3rd 40; 4th 30; 5th 29; 6th 28; 7th 27; 8th 26; 9th 25; 10th 24; 11th 23; 12th 22; 13th 21; 14th 20; 15th 19; 16th 18; 17th 17; 18th 16; 19th 15; 20th 14. Qualifying position: Pole 30 points; 2nd 25; 3rd 24; 4th 23; 5th 22; 6th 21; 7th 20; 8th 19; 9th 18; 10th 17; 11th 16; 12th 15; 13th 14; 14th 13; 15th 12; 16th 11; 17th 10; 18th 9; 19th 8; 20th 7. **Improvement from starting grid to finishing position:** 3 points per place improved. **Fastest lap:** 10 points. **Penalty points:** Any incident resulting in a driver being made to start from the back of the grid or pit lane -10 points. Any incident resulting in elimination during a race -10 points. Not starting after qualifying for a race -10 points. Speeding in pit lane -5 points. Black flag -20 points.

**CONSTRUCTORS** Finishing position (first car only): 1st 30 points; 2nd 25; 3rd 24; 4th 23; 5th 22; 6th 21; 7th 20; 8th 19; 9th 18; 10th 17; 11th 16; 12th 15; 13th 14; 14th 13; 15th 12; 16th 11; 17th 10; 18th 9; 19th 8; 20th 7. **Penalty points:** Any incident resulting in a car being made to start from the back of the grid or pit lane -10 points. Any incident resulting in elimination during a race -10 points. Not starting after qualifying for a race -10 points. Speeding in pit lane -5 points.

**BONUS POINTS** — only applies to Brazilian, Monaco, British, Belgian, Luxembourg and European Grand Prix. Correctly predicting winning driver: 100 points; second place: 200 points; third place: 300 points.

#### MAKE THREE SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THE FOUR GROUPS BELOW

##### DRIVERS

GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C		GROUP D	
01 Damon Hill	07 Mika Häkkinen	13 Olivier Panis	19 Giancarlo Fisichella	25 Williams	31 Arrows	32 Sauber	33 Tyrrell
02 Michael Schumacher	08 David Coulthard	14 Jos Verstappen	20 Shinji Nakano	26 Ferrari	37 Benetton	34 Minardi	35 Stewart
03 Jacques Villeneuve	09 Rubens Barrichello	15 Ukyo Katayama	21 Nicola Larini	27 McLaren	38 Vincenzo Sospiri	36 Lola	
04 Eddie Irvine	10 Heinz-Harald Frentzen	16 Pedro Diniz	22 Jarno Trulli	28 Jordan			
05 Jean Alesi	11 Johnny Herbert	17 Ricardo Rosset	23 Jan Magnussen	30 Ligier			
06 Gerhard Berger	12 Mika Salo	18 Ralf Schumacher	24 Vincenzo Sospiri				

##### CONSTRUCTORS

1st	2nd	3rd

FANTASY FORMULA ONE 24-HOUR ENTRY LINE: 0891 405 001

+44 990 100 311 outside the UK

0891 calls cost 50p per minute (standard tariffs apply to +44 990 calls). • For inquiries call 01582 702 720, Mon-Fri, 9am to 5pm

#### THE PRIZES

**JACKPOT** The team manager heading our Fantasy Formula One leaderboard after the European Grand Prix at Estoril, Portugal, on October 26, will win £25,000.

**INDIVIDUAL RACE WINNERS** The manager of the team which scores the most points in the Brazilian Grand Prix will win a trip for two to British Grand Prix on July 13.

The runner-up will get a Sony PlayStation with a Formula One and Porsche Challenge game worth £250.

• For details of a wide range of Formula One trips with BAC Sport, including three special Monaco tours, call 0171-456 7100.

#### TRANSFERS

If you've already entered a team you can change up to four selections before the Brazilian GP by calling 0891 555 994 (+44 990 100 394 ex UK) before noon on Thursday March 27. Your new team must comprise three selections from each of groups A, B, C and D. The first three selections you make will be deemed to be your prediction for the Brazilian GP bonus points.

#### TO ENTER BY PHONE

Call our entry hotline on 0891 405 001 (+44 990 100 311 outside the UK). Calls last approximately seven minutes and must be made using a Touch-tone telephone (most telephones with \* and # keys are Touch-tone).

Follow the instructions on the entry line and tap in your four two-digit selections in turn. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply.

You will then be asked to give your Fantasy

Formula One team name, together with your own name, address, postcode and daytime telephone number (please note, you need to speak these details). You will receive a 10-digit PIN number as confirmation of your entry. Please keep a record of this with your team details.

Entries can be made by faxing the form with your credit-card details to 01582 452106 (+44 1582 452106 outside the UK).

To qualify for the start of the Brazilian Grand

Prize, postal entries must be received by first post on Tuesday, March 25, 1997. Entries received after this date will be entered for the remaining grands prix.

Complete the form, right, with your 12 two-digit selections. The order in which you register your first three drivers will be your predictions for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd finishing places for the grands prix where bonus points apply.

Give your Fantasy Formula One team name,

together with your own name, address, postcode and daytime telephone number. Enclose a sterling cheque for £2.50 or provide your credit-card details and post it to: The Times Fantasy Formula One, Abacus House, Dudley Street, Luton LU1 1ZZ. Or fax it on 01582 452106 (+44 1582 452106 outside the UK).

The closing date for receipt of this form to qualify for the Brazilian Grand Prix is first post Tuesday, March 25, 1997, and noon on that day for faxed entries.

**GROUP A AND B DRIVERS**

1st	2nd	3rd



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Morag Preston goes on course to find her prejudices against golf being whacked over the horizon

# The greenest swinger in town

MARTIN BEDDOE

**T**railing a cumbersome bag of golf clubs in chase of an invisible white ball could only spoil a good walk — or so I thought. Frightful images of Pringle-clad corporate clones and exclusively male committees nearly put me off the notion altogether, so I approached my first golf lesson with all the excitement of a trip to the dentist.

Lured by leather-tanned celebrities, high-profile businessmen and wealthy football players alike, golf appeared to me to be the perfect leisure-time filler for Essex Man. It did not look too strenuous, you did not come away caked in mud, and players had eyes for a smart label. Best of all, after every cathartic stroke, there was always plenty of time to cross clubs in competitive business banter, stop for a tot of whisky or quench your thirst with a splash of something fruity if you happened to be some-where sunny.

An estimated 1.5 million Brits tee off abroad each year. The Costa del Sol, host to the Ryder Cup in September, is tipped to be this year's golfing hot spot and, until the Channel Tunnel fire, France was another favourite for weekend breaks. The number of public courses in the South East of England has exploded over the past five years, bringing the game to people who could not otherwise afford it. Pay-and-play clubs are popping up all over the place, and the stigma associated with private clubs is fading. All of which could be seen as a sign that the most bourgeois of games is at last becoming fashionable.



Gazza and Sheryl threw a celebrity bash to celebrate their marriage.

Almost invisible under layers of warm clothing, I launched myself onto the picturesque course designed by Jack Nicklaus II, under the wing of the club professional Peter Blaze. A former amateur for Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club, whose father, a vicar, introduced him to the delights of the game, Blaze was the perfect coach. Encouraging, ever optimistic and determined not to give up on me, he swung me through four intense hours of lessons over two days. Much to my initial disappointment, Blaze kept me

rooted to the same patch of turf, forbidding me from joining the throng of diamond-cut regulars.

Only after he had corrected my set-up position for the nth time was I given licence to hit the ball. I armed myself with an iron and we progressed to the swing. I found that the "interlocking grip" was best for me. To my annoyance, however, I missed the ball every time. My banana skin? Indelible memories of school sports; I was belting the ball with all the panache of a second-team hockey player. This is where a personal coach is invaluable — Blaze was able to point out the problem well before I struck oil. I threaded the club under my arms and behind my back, he showed me exactly how to bend my knees, and it worked. "Sweet as a nut," he sighed, as I hit my first faultless ball. "Golfers are thick. Try not to think about what you're doing."

**A**s the largest commercial operator of golf courses in the UK, Marriott Hotels & Country Clubs has created a programme called *Golf Tuition*. After you have had 12 lessons covering every aspect of the game, you will receive a certificate of competency, enabling you to play on any of Marriott's 14 manicured courses.

According to Blaze, however: "It's not what's in black and white, it's what happens."

In front of the 100-year-old manor house (first mentioned in the *Domesday Book*), he led me to the putting green. I adapted my grip, stance, posture, and swing. But having only just got used to a wood (my favourite), I tended to overshoot the hole every time. Again, Blaze let me in on another complicated exercise to improve my alignment — "one to practise at home" — and it seemed to do the trick.



Don't mean a thing if you can't get that swing: Morag Preston makes her debut at Hanbury Manor in Hertfordshire

## SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This hand was played in the Lederer Memorial Trophy at the Young Chelsea Bridge Club in October.

Dealer East

East-West game

IMPs

+K10	N	eAJ7632
♦Q	W	♦J763
♦K10986	E	♦983
♦765	S	—
♦1084		—
♦9854		—
♦A2		—
♦KJ		—
		♦AJ875

W N E S

2H — 4H (1) Pass 1C

Pass 5S (3) Double 6C (2)

All Pass — — —

Contract: Six Clubs by South. Lead: queen of spades

(1) Showing a good raise in clubs with a singleton heart. (2) "Five ace" Blackwood. (3) The response showed two of the five "aces" (the trump king counted as an ace), plus the queen of clubs.

After West's queen of spades lead it seemed likely that East's double of Five Spades showed he had the ace. So the declarer brightly ducked in dummy. Thus John Armstrong, as East had to decide whether East had a singleton or doubleton spade. He eventually played low, and now declarer's spade losers later went away on dummy's diamonds.

I think East might have deduced the queen of spades was singleton. After all, what would West (Nevena Deleva) lead if she had Qx of spades?

## KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE  
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

### Lautier wins

After a series of modest results, the French grandmaster Joel Lautier has regained his form with a fine victory in the tournament at Ubeda in Spain. Ubeda ran more or less concurrently with the more glamorous competition in Linares and so attracted less attention. However, it was a powerful tournament in its own right, reaching category 16 on the World Chess Federation scale.

White: Joel Lautier  
Black: Peter Leko

Ubeda 1997

**Sicilian Defence**

1 e4 c5 2 Bb5 Bg7  
2 d4 Bb5 Ne5  
3 d5 Nc6 4 Nc3 e5  
4 Nbd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 Nc6  
6 g3 Nf6 7 Bg2 Nc6  
8 0-0 Be7 9 Bc3 0-0  
10 Ce2 Oc7 11 Nb5 Ob6  
12 Nc4 Rd8 13 Nbd4  
14 Nc4 Rd8 15 Nc3 Be6  
16 Nc5 Nd7 17 Rf3 Nc5  
18 Rh3 Nc6 19 Rf7 Nc5  
20 Cb4 Nc6 21 Ch4 Bd8

**Raymond Keene writes on chess**

Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

**Ubeda final cross-table**

1 Lautier	2 Bellavista	3 Savary	4 Almasi	5 Andersson	6 Karpov	7 Leko	8 Timman	9 Alapert	10 Steen	11 Steen	12 Steen
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1	3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2	4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3	5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5	7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6	8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	10 11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	11 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

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# Bromsgrove revel in victory after long wait

By JOHN GOODBODY

OF ALL the girls' national championships, perhaps only netball generates greater enthusiasm among schools than hockey. With the sport enjoying a regular place on the Olympic programme and the Great Britain women just missing the bronze medal in a penalty shoot-out in Atlanta, hockey has a status that many other activities envy.

The finals of British Aerospace championships, which took place at Milton Keynes last week, were the climax of a national tournament that this winter attracted 1,800 schools and brought ultimate victories for Bromsgrove School, Worcester, in the under-18s and Gordano, Bristol, in the under-16s competitions.

Watching with dispassionate interest was Maggie Sowave, the director of player performance with the All-England Women's Hockey Association. She said: "If you compare our junior level with other countries at the highest level, I think we have a good understanding and knowledge of the game but we can improve our personal fitness and skill levels."

"Often we need to put pace on the hit. We simply don't hit the ball hard enough. Often we need to control and pass, rather than control, dribble



## Sport in Schools

and pass. That said, we still want to keep the individual creative side of the game."

One girl who impressed with her goalscoring in the finals was Fiona Gibson, from Bromsgrove, an England under-18 international. Her six goals beat her school, the Midlands champions, to four consecutive victories against the other regional winners.

Caroline Ralph, the head of girls' PE at Bromsgrove, said:

"She wants to score goals. Whereas others might step back in the circle, she wants to be in there."

Their decisive victory came against Cheltenham Ladies College, where Ralph had taught for the previous six years. "Although my loyalties were slightly divided, I felt physically sick beforehand with nerves," she said. "We put pressure on them at every possible opportunity and

Cheltenham started making mistakes. To win 3-0 was a fantastic result."

It was Bromsgrove's first victory in the 17 years of the tournament and the team, containing three other internationals, Lucilla Wright, her sister, Sally, and Liz Fox, only conceded one goal in the finals.

The under-16 competition was tighter. Gordano totalled ten points. They finished one point clear of Queenswood, of Hertfordshire, whose squad contained several of the team

that finished second in the Aberdare tennis cup last summer and third in the national skiing championships.

Pete Atwell, coach to the England under-18 side, has built up an impressive reputation at Gordano, taking the senior schools' title two years ago. The outstanding players represent the local Portishead club every Saturday to gain extra experience.

He said: "We are trying to develop players with athleticism. Hockey is now a fast game and it is getting faster. It

is not just speed of movement, it is speed of thought. We try to stretch play out and exploit the space behind the opposing players."

This was what they did in the game against Queenswood, who had been more impressive in the two morning matches. Gordano outplayed Queenswood, winning 4-0, and, with both schools victorious in their final matches, took the title by the single point.

Dame Alice Harpur, of Bedford, may have finished last, with two points, but in Lucy

Penfound, 12, they possessed the youngest player to have been selected for the England under-16 team to play in the Home Countries tournament this month.

Angie Grafton, the head of PE, said: "When Lucy started playing three years ago you could see she was going to be so good just by the way she walked and took hold of the stick."

"Her stick-work skills are very good and, in shooting, she can undercut the ball. She is a girl to watch."

## ROWING

### Ellis steers her way to fifth Head title

"IF WE don't cross the line first, we haven't won the Head," Richard Phelps, the Thames RC coach, said before the Women's Eights Head on Saturday (Mike Rosewell writes). The self-evident comment for most sports had special significance for his crew, with five athletes from the Olympic Games in Atlanta on board, who were starting fourth with three fast crews ahead of them.

Thames, stroked by Ali Gill, a veteran of three Olympics, and controlled by Suzie Ellis, Great Britain's Olympic cox, duly conformed. Ellis steered her crew past Twidwell Scullers at Barnes and overhauled Cambridge's Boat Race crew along Chiswick Eyot, before sweeping past London University's crew of international aspirants in the last mile.

Thames then waited anx-

iously to see two fancied late starters, a crew of Holland internationals from Utrecht, and a crew of other British hopefuls from Marlow, but they posed no threat to Thames's superiority, which produced a 16-second winning cushion over Marlow. The result was consolation for Ellis, who, since Atlanta, has failed to gain selection with Cambridge's men but was given a day off from her reserve crew duties to achieve her fifth Head title.

The large time differences between the established internationals in the Thame and Marlow crews and the rest of the pack was perhaps worrying, but there is clearly student talent at London, Cambridge and Imperial College, who rose from 16th to seventh.

Photograph, page 34

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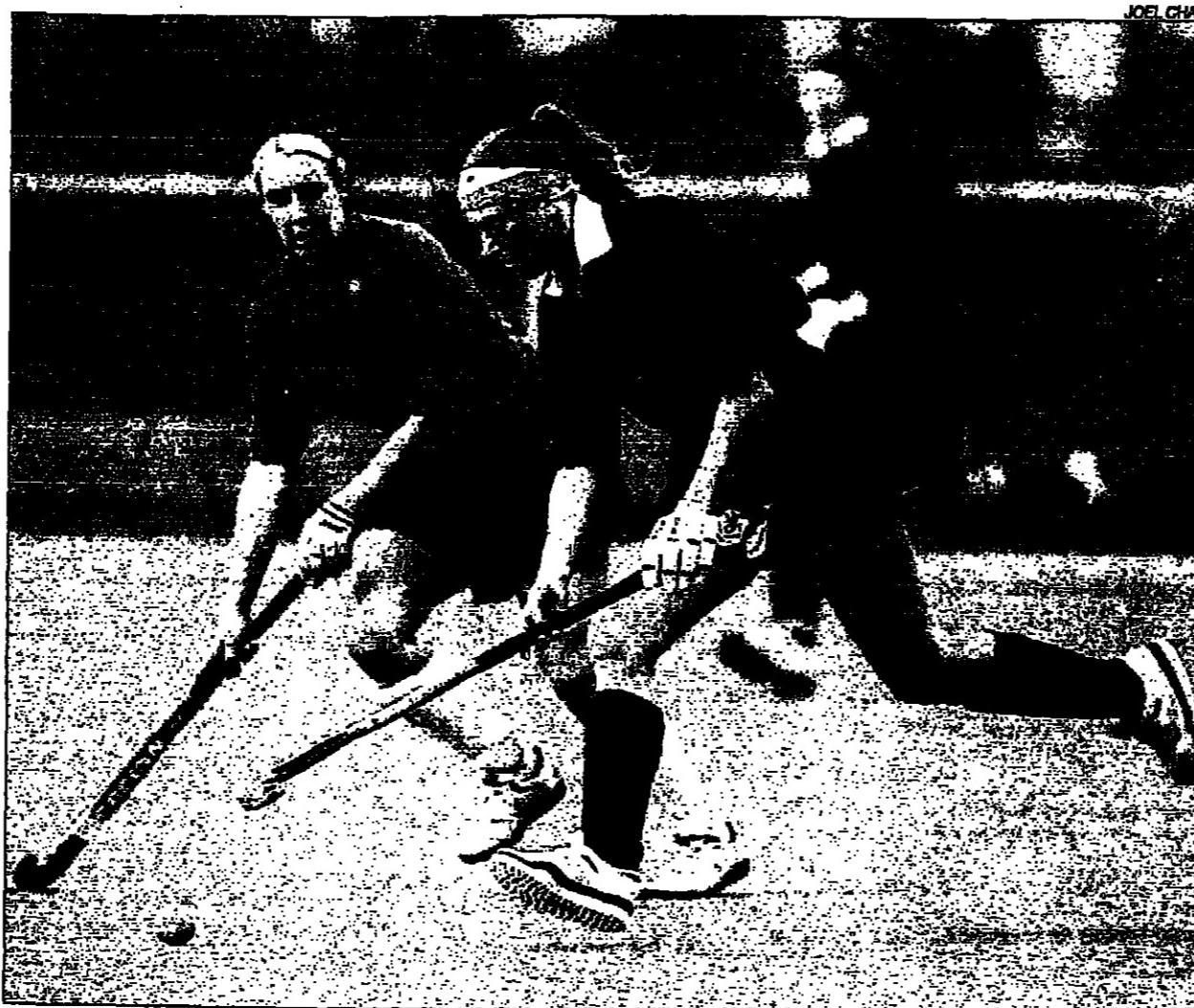
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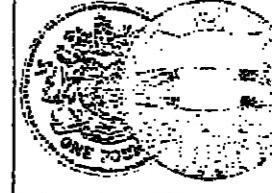
CHANGING TIMES



Martine Gunter, right, of Gordano, the under-16 winners, in full stride in her team's 4-0 triumph over Queenswood

# Lawyers spot a lucrative field of play

## THE BUSINESS OF SPORT



Some weeks it seems that sport stars are busier fighting in the courtroom than on the pitch. The score-draw result in the Grobelaar bribery case, which concluded last week, left everyone dissatisfied except the lawyers, who will have the chance to claim further appearance fees at a retrial. Elsewhere, Welsh rugby union found itself in the dock over its disciplinary procedure, while yet another footballer, Crystal Palace's Darren Pitcher, is preparing to take an opponent to court to win damages over a career-threatening injury.

Sport used to be able to muddle through these kind of problems without recourse to courts. Most governing bodies took an amateur approach to business affairs and were happier dealing with problems using committees composed of the great and the good. But with the increasing sums of money scattered throughout the sporting world, gentlemen's agreements and verbal contracts no longer guarantee agreement.

But this definition still leaves the door ajar for claims based on arguments that the injury was suffered because of illegal play. The floodgates appear to be opening with Darren Pitcher becoming the latest footballer to take to the courts, suing Paul Reid, of Huddersfield, for £50,000 over a tackle that has virtually ended his career. Italian authorities have meanwhile taken injury claims to their logical extreme, charging Frank Williams — the head of the motor racing team — with manslaughter in Italy after the death of Ayrton Senna.

But it is not just at the professional end of the game that lawyers are finding regular employment. Ben Smolton — a former schoolboy rugby player who was paralysed after a scrum collapsed — last year won a negligence claim against the referee. The case raised the spectre of referees — and especially volunteers who do not have the legal support of a referee's association — becoming responsible for huge damages claims.

With sports authorities, referees and players all in the firing line of the law, sport faces a nightmare scenario where legal intervention could cause total chaos — as nearly happened this year with the five nations' championship. Sports authorities must work hard to make their sports legally watertight — perhaps following the lead of the Atlanta Olympics and devise contracts to ensure that internal disciplinary procedures are legally binding.

ALASDAIR MURRAY

## SAILING

### Leaders find storm shelter as Challenge fleet goes west

BY EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

A WEEK into the fourth leg of the BT Global Challenge, which takes the 14-strong fleet from Sydney to Cape Town, the crews are experiencing typically unpleasant, cold and windy conditions as they track westwards towards the Kerguelen Islands with Tasmania now well astern.

With the finish still 5,000 miles to the northwest, the boats are tightly bunched. Only about 100 miles separate the joint leaders, *Global Teamwork* and *Save The Children*, from the back marker, *Time & Tide*.

In the past few days, however, the key has been the decision by the leading skippers, Mervyn Owen and Andy Hindley, to head south as quickly as possible to an area of stronger and steadier winds. At the end of last week, several yachts to the north of the pack found the wind abating, allowing *Teamwork* to the south, to move from twelfth position into the lead.

So far, the leg has produced spectacular thunderstorms and at least one dose of severe weather in which winds gusted to more than 70 knots, although there have been no reported injuries or damage. Yesterday the fleet was beating under much-reduced sail against 25-30 knot westerlies. In the Vendée Globe non-stop single-handed round-the-world race, Pete Goss, of Great Britain, has picked up the northeast trade winds after crossing the doldrum belt. Goss is reaching on a direct course for the finish in steady easterlies, which are pushing *Aqua Quorum* along at an average of nine knots.

"*Aqua Quorum* is in good condition," Goss reported yesterday. "My generator is working well, but I still have to pump water for the cooling system. Apart from that, which takes three to four hours a day, I can concentrate on sailing the boat. I even have time to read a little."

During the past week, Goss has caught and overtaken the only other competitor still racing, the Frenchwoman, Catherine Chabaud, on the 60ft *Whirlpool Europe 2*.

Yesterday Goss was about 70 miles ahead of her with an estimated finish date at Les Sables d'Olonne of March 22. The Briton looks likely to finish fifth overall, even after his 13-day compensation for the rescue of Raphael Dinelli is taken into account.

Although this is essentially an amateur event, all the sport's leading men, including Hugh Duff and Tony Alcock, the respective world indoor and outdoor singles champions, will be there, because being selected for your country is still regarded as the highest honour available in the game.

John Price, of Swansea, the holder of the singles title, has been drawn to play the Scottish champion, Robert Marshall, in the semi-finals, and Mark Bantock, of Desborough (Maidenhead), takes on the Irish champion, Neil Booth.

Boston's women bowlers equalled a record that Richmonde had held for 18 years when they won the women's national inter-club championship for the fourth time at the New Earswick club, York, on Saturday.

Teignbridge, their final opponents, who were regarded as rank outsiders, held their own for the first five ends. But they capitulated in the second half, when the Lincolnshire team's victory charge was led by Chris Horn, who skipped her rink to a 35-8 win over Mavis Powlesland.

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POSITIONS (with miles to Cape Town as at 1350 GMT yesterday): 1, *Save The Children* 5,999.2; *Global Teamwork* 5,001.1; *Toshiba Wave Warrior* 5,013.4; Group 1 5,019.5; 9, 5,041.5; 10, 5,042.6; 11, 5,043.6; 12, 5,044.6; 13, 5,051.5; 14, 5,054.6; 15, 5,055.6; 16, 5,056.6; 17, 5,057.6; 18, 5,058.6; 19, 5,059.6; 20, 5,060.6; 21, 5,061.6; 22, 5,062.6; 23, 5,063.6; 24, 5,064.6; 25, 5,065.6; 26, 5,066.6; 27, 5,067.6; 28, 5,068.6; 29, 5,069.6; 30, 5,070.6; 31, 5,071.6; 32, 5,072.6; 33, 5,073.6; 34, 5,074.6; 35, 5,075.6; 36, 5,076.6; 37, 5,077.6; 38, 5,078.6; 39, 5,079.6; 40, 5,080.6; 41, 5,081.6; 42, 5,082.6; 43, 5,083.6; 44, 5,084.6; 45, 5,085.6; 46, 5,086.6; 47, 5,087.6; 48, 5,088.6; 49, 5,089.6; 50, 5,090.6; 51, 5,091.6; 52, 5,092.6; 53, 5,093.6; 54, 5,094.6; 55, 5,095.6; 56, 5,096.6; 57, 5,097.6; 58, 5,098.6; 59, 5,099.6; 60, 5,100.6; 61, 5,101.6; 62, 5,102.6; 63, 5,103.6; 64, 5,104.6; 65, 5,105.6; 66, 5,106.6; 67, 5,107.6; 68, 5,108.6; 69, 5,109.6; 70, 5,110.6; 71, 5,111.6; 72, 5,112.6; 73, 5,113.6; 74, 5,114.6; 75, 5,115.6; 76, 5,116.6; 77, 5,117.6; 78, 5,118.6; 79, 5,119.6; 80, 5,120.6; 81, 5,121.6; 82, 5,122.6; 83, 5,123.6; 84, 5,124.6; 85, 5,125.6; 86, 5,126.6; 87, 5,127.6; 88, 5,128.6; 89, 5,129.6; 90, 5,130.6; 91, 5,131.6; 92, 5,132.6; 93, 5,133.6; 94, 5,134.6; 95, 5,135.6; 96, 5,136.6; 97, 5,137.6; 98, 5,138.6; 99, 5,139.6; 100, 5,140.6; 101, 5,141.6; 102, 5,142.6; 103, 5,143.6; 104, 5,144.6; 105, 5,145.6; 106, 5,146.6; 107, 5,147.6; 108, 5,148.6; 109, 5,149.6; 110, 5,15

## Whether words bear defamatory meaning

Mapp v News Group Newspapers Ltd

Gillan v Same  
Goscomb v Same  
Walton v Same

Before Lord Justice Hirst, Lord Justice Millett and Lord Justice Hutchison  
(Judgment February 27)

A judge asked to rule whether words complained of in an action for defamation were capable of bearing the meaning alleged by the plaintiff should evaluate the words complained of and delimit the range of meanings of which they were reasonably capable, exercising his own judgment in the light of the authorities. The decision should not be treated in the same way as an application to strike out part of the pleadings.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing an appeal by the defendants. News Group Newspapers, publishers of the *News of the World*, against a decision of Sir Michael Davies on May 19, 1995 dismissing the defendants' summons under Order 82, rule 3A of the Rules of the Supreme Court to determine whether the words in that newspaper complained of by PC Gerald Mapp, PC Bernard James Gillan, PC Paul John Goscomb and Sgt Robert Walton in separate libel actions were capable of bearing the meaning attributed to them in the statement of claim.

Order 82, rule 3A provides: "(1) At any time after service of the statement of claim either party may apply to a judge in chambers

for an order determining whether or not the words complained of are capable of bearing a particular meaning or meanings attributed to them in the pleadings."

"(2) If it appears to the judge on the hearing of an application under paragraph (1) that none of the words complained of are capable of bearing the meaning or meanings attributed to them in the pleadings, he may dismiss the claim or make such other order or give such judgment in the proceedings as may be just."

Mr James Price, QC, for the defendants; Mr Thomas Shields, QC, for the plaintiffs.

LORD JUSTICE HIRST said that in actions for defamation, where questions as to the meaning of the words complained of were in issue, as they nearly always were, the functions of the judge and the jury had always been different.

It was for the judge to rule, when asked to do so, whether the words were capable of bearing a particular meaning or meanings alleged in the statement of claim, in other words to lay down the limits of the range of possible defamatory meanings of which the words were capable. It was for the jury to determine the actual meaning of the words within that permissible range.

Traditionally, any such ruling had been sought and given at the trial itself, unless tried as a preliminary issue, and any earlier interlocutory proceedings were confined to summons to strike out or give judgment in the pleadings as may be just.

Mr Price had submitted that no reasonable reader in plain and obvious

cases. In September 1994, Order 82, rule 3A had replaced the Order 18, rule 19, strike-out procedure. In rejecting the defendants' summons, the judge had referred to the tendency of the courts to leave a meaning to the jury unless it was a very clear-cut case that should be struck out.

Mr Price had suggested that was too high a test, and harked back to the Order 18, rule 19 procedure.

In His Lordship's judgment the proper role for the judge when adjudicating a question under Order 82, rule 3A was to evaluate the words complained of and to delimit the range of meanings of which the words were reasonably capable exercising his own judgment in the light of the authorities laid down in *Silvers Daily Telegraph* ([1968] 2 QB 157, [1968] *Levi's Daily Telegraph* ([1964] 1 AC 234, 257); *Jones v Stedman* ([1968] 1 WLR 1500); and *Morgan v Colmans Print Ltd* ([1971] 1 WLR 1239, 1251) and without any Order 18, rule 19 overruled.

It would, as was common ground, still be open to the plaintiff to rely on any lesser defamatory meanings within the permissible range, but not on any meanings outside it.

The whole purpose of the new rule was to enable the court to fix in advance the ground rules on permissible meanings, which were of such cardinal importance in defamation actions, not only for the purpose of assessing the degree of injury to the plaintiff's reputation, but also for the purpose of evaluating any defences raised, in

particular justification and fair comment.

That applied with particular force in such cases as the instant where there was a defense of justification of a lesser meaning than that pleaded in the statement of claim.

The plaintiffs who were police officers complained of an article in the newspaper on February 2, 1992 which said:

"Drug quiz cop kills himself"

Police Sergeant Gerry Carroll

killed himself after being ordered

to provide information about ex-

colleagues accused of peddling

drugs. Sgt Carroll, 46, shot himself

through the head in a cell. He was

custody officer with the drug

squad in Stoke Newington, North

London, when eight fellow officers

were alleged to have been involved

in drug dealing and bribery.

The accused officers have been transferred to other police stations while an investigation is carried out.

The pleaded defamatory meaning at issue in the instant proceedings was:

"The said words in their natural

and ordinary meaning meant and

were understood to mean that the

plaintiff was guilty of involvement

in drug dealing and bribery, that

Sergeant Carroll had been in a

position to know this because he

had been working with the plain-

tiff at the time, and that he had

killed himself because he would

otherwise have to confirm the

plaintiff's involvement."

Mr Price had submitted that no reasonable reader in plain and obvious

reading that item in the *News of the World* would infer actual guilt

on the part of the plaintiff.

Solicitors: Farter & Co; Russell Jones & Walker.

## Power to resolve costs dispute

Electricity Supply Nominees Ltd v Farrell and Others

Before Lord Justice Kennedy, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Mr Justice Buckley  
(Judgment February 3)

Following a consent order a High Court judge retained jurisdiction to resolve a dispute in relation to interest on costs.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing the appeal of Electricity Supply Nominees Ltd from the decision on February 2, 1996 of Judge Bowsher, QC, sitting on behalf of the plaintiff's business, whereby the plaintiff's application for liberty to enter judgment for interest on taxed costs was refused.

Following a settlement, a consent order was made by the court staying the plaintiff's proceedings against the defendant under Order 22, rule 4 of the Rules of the Supreme Court and enabling the plaintiff to withdraw the defendant's payments into court.

The plaintiff's solicitors were dilatory in lodging their bill of costs and the defendants refused to pay interest on the costs for the whole period from the date of the consent order.

Only some of the sums on the

taxing master's certificates were

paid and the plaintiff sought an order, inter alia, that the stay of enforcement proceedings could be commenced as the defendants were in breach of the consent order.

The order was refused on the ground that once money paid into court had been accepted, or leave to take the money out had been given, the court ceased to have jurisdiction in the matter and all costs matters were handed over to the taxing master.

Mr Jeremy Morgan for the plaintiff; Mr Roger Stewart for the second, third and fourth defendants; the first defendant took no part in the appeal.

LORD JUSTICE KENNEDY said that the defendants contended that once the consent order was made, the High Court had discharged its function save for the limited functions delegated to the taxing master; those functions were not wide enough to enable a taxing master to resolve disputes as to recovery of interest on costs and the only remedy was to commence fresh proceedings.

The plaintiff submitted that the court retained jurisdiction, once a consent order had been made, to make the order it sought and that it

Having considered the case of *Hunt v R. M. Douglas (1990) 1 AC 398*, on a true construction of the relevant consent order interest on costs under the Judgments Act 1838 ran from the date of the consent order and by way of mandamus to require the secretary of state to pay the compensation.

Section 133 of the Criminal

Justice Act 1988 provides:

"[...] when a person has been convicted of a criminal offence and subsequently his conviction has been reversed [...] the secretary of state shall pay compensation for the miscarriage of justice to the

plaintiff."

Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Mr Justice Buckley agreed.

Solicitors: Eversheds; Warner Cranston; Southwark and Reynolds Porter Chamberlain.

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Atlantic Commercial (UK) Ltd

Before Mr Justice Popplewell  
(Judgment February 25)

Compensation for a miscarriage of justice was only payable to a natural person and could not be paid to a company.

Mr Justice Popplewell so held in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing the application of Atlantic Commercial (UK) Ltd for judicial review by way of certiorari to quash the decision of the Secretary of State for the Home Department to refuse ex gratia compensation as well as compensation under section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and by way of mandamus to require the secretary of state to pay the compensation.

From the wording of section 133 itself his Lordship was of the view that the contrary was the intention and it did appear that section 133 was not intended to cover a company.

The master did not rest there.

His Lordship was entitled to look at article 14.6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966 (United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2/2000) which it was quite clear was the forerunner of the legislation.

The covenant was intended to apply to natural individuals and not to companies.

The next aspect of the case was to look at ex gratia payments which were made in accordance with the secretary of state's written answer to a House of Commons question of November 29, 1985.

It was abundantly clear that those were not intended to cover a company. Such payments related to people who had been in custody.

Solicitors: Liddell Zurbrugg Treasury Solicitor.

MRS JUSTICE HALE said that

the mother, a United Kingdom

person who has suffered punishment as a result of such conviction..."

The applicant had been charged with being knowingly concerned in the exportation of prohibited goods contrary to section 68 of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 but on July 19, 1994 the Court of Appeal quashed the conviction because of abuse of process by the prosecuting authority.

Mr Peter Irvin for the applicant;

Mr Nigel Fleming, QC, for the secretary of state.

MRS JUSTICE POPPLEWELL said that simply reading section 133 it seemed to his Lordship that it was entirely inappropriate to cover the position of a company.

From the wording of section 133 itself his Lordship was of the view that the contrary was the intention and it did appear that section 133 was not intended to cover a company.

The master did not rest there.

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Solicitors: Merriman White & Co; Timus Sauer Decher.

## No compensation for company

Regina v Secretary of State for the Home Department, Ex parte Atlantic Commercial (UK) Ltd

Before Mr Justice Popplewell  
(Judgment February 25)

Compensation for a miscarriage of justice was only payable to a natural person and could not be paid to a company.

Mr Justice Popplewell so held in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing the application of Atlantic Commercial (UK) Ltd for judicial review by way of certiorari to quash the decision of the Secretary of State for the Home Department to refuse ex gratia compensation as well as compensation under section 133 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 and by way of mandamus to require the secretary of state to pay the compensation.

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It was abundantly clear that those were not intended to cover a company. Such payments related to people who had been in custody.

Solicitors: Merriman White & Co; Timus Sauer Decher.

## Tenants' rights avoided in transfer of building

Michaels and Another v Harry House (Marylebone) Ltd

Before Mr Justice Lloyd  
(Judgment March 3)

The commercial sale of a block of flats did not give rise to statutory rights of pre-emption in favour of qualifying tenants under Part I of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1987 because the building was transferred by the landlord to an associated company within section 73(6)(5) of the Companies Act 1985, and therefore the transfer did not fall within the terms of section 73(6)(1).

TWD also entered into a property sale agreement with the purchaser to sell the El issued shares in the defendant and the loan notes, conditionally on completion of the property sale agreement. The purchaser also had the benefit of a placing agreement.

Over £10,000,000 of the consideration was satisfied by new placing shares, which were listed on the Stock Exchange as a condition precedent to that agreement.

Completion of both the share placement and property sale took place on March 25. By mistake the property transfer was dated March 24, whereas the share transfer was correctly dated March 25.

The tenants were informed of the sale by TWD and the defendant. The residents' association sought intervention under section 11 of the 1987 Act, some of which was supplied although the defendant denied their entitlement to it. The tenants nevertheless failed to serve a notice within three months as required by section 12. The plaintiffs did not begin proceedings until 1996.

Mr John Mowbray, QC and Mr Edward Cousins for the plaintiffs; Ms Kim Lewis, QC and Mr Anthony Tanney for the defendant.

MRS JUSTICE LLOYD said that the disposal within Part I of the 1987 Act, took place on the execution of the transfer in unconditional form, not on the date of registration: see *Mainmair v Trustees of Henry Smith's Charity* (The Times February 20, 1996) [1996] 3 WLR 1033.

The transfer of the freehold to the defendant was accepted as a relevant disposal unless it was excepted by section 42(1) of the 1987 Act as a disposal to an associated company. What had to be looked at was the moment of the transfer.

The parties clearly intended the property transfer to become unconditionally prior to the share transfer.

The evidence established that the transfer was not a relevant disposal. It followed that the action failed.

Solicitors: Merriman White & Co; Timus Sauer Decher.

## EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION

THE TIMES

# Win a £36,000 Mercedes SLK

## and help raise money for Comic Relief

To support the biggest-ever Red Nose Day campaign McLaren International, one of the most successful Grand Prix teams in history, and their close friends the Spice Girls, have linked up with *The Times* to offer you the chance to win a Mercedes SLK worth more than £36,000. The winner will receive the prize — complete with its Red Car Nose — at the British Grand Prix at Silverstone on July 13.

There are also runners-up prizes of a two-night stay at a top hotel in Edinburgh, travelling on Virgin's newly launched Red Nose Cross Country train, plus a pair of flights to Paris with Air France.

For your chance to win call our hotline with the answer to the question below. All profits from the phone line will be donated to Comic Relief — so the more times you enter, the more money you can raise to help some of the poorest people in the UK and Africa.



SMALL CHANGE  
**BIG**  
DIFFERENCE  
RED NOSE DAY  
MARCH 14TH '97

### CALL OUR COMPETITION HOTLINE ON 0891 335 599

0891 calls cost 50p per minute

In a unique event earlier this year, McLaren presented their new Formula One team, West McLaren Mercedes, at a glittering event in front of 5,000 guests which

featured a spectacular appearance of the Spice Girls. Both McLaren and the girls are strong supporters of Comic Relief. The Spice Girls are donating the royalties of their latest release *Who Do You Think You Are?* to this year's campaign and will be performing live on BBC1 this Friday with the alternative Spice Girls.



including Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders as the *Sugar Lumps*.

McLaren have, this year, created a new partnership with West and Mercedes-Benz for the 1997 Formula 1 World Championship. Strong on technical achievements through commitment to research and advanced engineering, McLaren already have 104 Grands Prix wins to their name and are set for greater achievements this year.

#### HOW TO ENTER

Call our hotline, above, before midnight Saturday March 22 with the answer to this question:

*How much money has Comic Relief raised in its five previous Red Nose Days?*

a) 100 million b) 112 million c) 150 million

All proceeds from the line will go to Comic Relief. Normal TNL competition rules apply.

#### COMIC RELIEF — THE FACTS

Red Nose Day is Friday, March 14. Over five Red Nose Days, Comic Relief has raised more than £112 million. Two-thirds of the money goes to self-sufficiency projects in Africa, and one-third goes to projects in the UK which support older people and young people who are homeless, disabled or who have drug and alcohol problems.

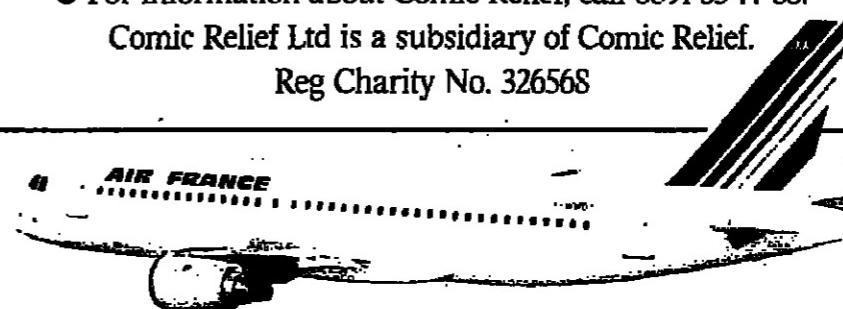
#### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

*Buy a red nose for your car at any Texaco service station, or one for your face or to wear as a badge. Do something and get sponsored. Donate money by calling: 0345 460 460. Watch the BBC1 extravaganza hosted by Lenny Henry on Friday at 7pm.*

• For information about Comic Relief, call 0891 55 77 88.

Comic Relief Ltd is a subsidiary of Comic Relief.

Reg Charity No. 326568



CHANGING TIMES



## COMPANIES

MICHAEL CLARK

# UB needs more than a crumb of comfort

**UNITED BISCUITS:** Eric Nicoli, no longer the bright, young, new broom, has had six years to sort out the problems of Britain's biscuits and snacks champion. The City, hitherto patient, will be looking for full-year figures that show a significantly improved performance on Thursday from the group that owns the Phileas Fogg brand, and McVitie and KP, after a period of restructuring.

NatWest Securities forecasts that pre-tax profits will rebound from £23 million to £109 million, while earnings per share jump from less than 1p to 14.4p. Profits are expected to be up in the group's domestic operations, such as snacks, Ross Young's and biscuits, with the benefit of lower raw material costs filtering through. But investors will want to know that marketing has not been sacrificed to bolster short-term profits.

The results will be tarnished by further exceptional losses in excess of £100 million. Disposal of Ross Vegetables for £44 million, announced in December, will dilute earnings, and the snacks division will again be held back by the price war with PepsiCo's Walkers.

**ZENECA:** After January's comprehensive trading update, tomorrow's full-year figures are likely to contain few surprises. Last week's warning from the US Food and Drug Administration about production standards should not ruffle any feathers. UBS, the broker, is looking for a further healthy increase in earnings. Pre-tax profits are expected to be up about 14 per cent to top £1 billion, with earnings 13 per cent better at 70.3p per share. A similar increase in the payout is

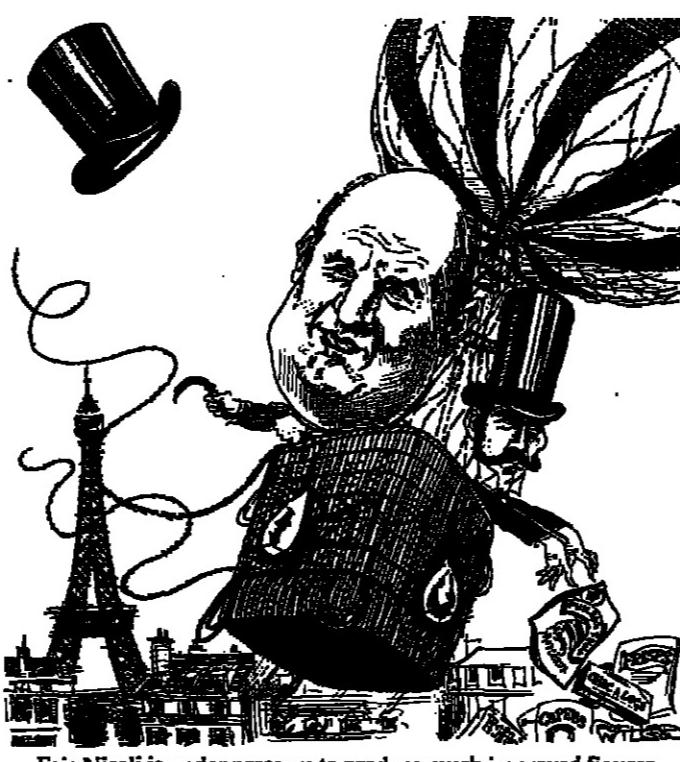
also envisaged at 35p. The specialty end of the group will have benefited from shedding peripheral businesses.

**ORANGE:** Increased losses should dominate full-year figures tomorrow, although the market is unlikely to be too perturbed. The deficit is expected to grow from £197 million to £239 million, with the loss per share up 21 per cent to 19.9p. Brokers say that Orange is meeting all its targets, with 404,000 new subscribers recorded in the past year. Revenues will have soared from £228 million to £614 million because of the inclusion of French and German service providers and a change of accounting policy on the sale of handsets. Once again there is no dividend.

**REED INTERNATIONAL:** Brokers will pay close attention to final figures on Wednesday, in the wake of December's profits warning. News is expected on the sale of the remaining consumer books division. After the latest restructuring, Reed will rely heavily on the scientific and legal publishing for growth.

Despite recent downgradings, analysts expect pre-tax profits of £879 million, up 7 per cent. Reed has spent about £150 million on acquisitions in the past year and these should be contributing. But a softening in the travel information market will not help. Nor will currency fluctuations. Shareholders should be rewarded with a 10 per cent higher payout of 27p.

**RENTOKIL INITIAL:** On Wednesday all eyes will again be focused on whether the group has achieved its target 20 per cent



Eric Nicoli is under pressure to produce much-improved figures

earnings growth. Recent indications would suggest that trading in the second half has been tough. Estimates of pre-tax profits range from £35 million to £335 million, compared with £214 million last time. More importantly, brokers still expect another 20 per cent gain in earnings to 17p a share.

The figures will be dented by an exceptional item of £20 million relating to recently acquired BET, with a further £20 million lost through currency fluctuations.

**TI GROUP:** The City expects a solid full-year performance with pre-tax profits on Wednesday up to as much as £217 million (£182 million). It is too early for a useful contribution from Forsheda, the polymer engineering group, and with automotives struggling, John Crane and Dowty Aerospace made most of the running. Expect earnings up about 19 per cent at 30.7p.

**SCHRODERS:** Bringing up the tail of the annual bank reporting

season on Wednesday is one of the City's few remaining independent merchant banks, still nearly half family owned.

Schroders, tipped by NatWest Securities to post a 22 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £240 million, should have benefited from a good second half in investment banking from fees earned on the Northern Electric bids, the Imperial Tobacco float and the merger of Lucas and Varsity.

On the asset management side, funds are up about a quarter to more than £92 billion. The net dividend could rise by a respectable 16 per cent to 18.5p a share.

**MIRROR GROUP:** Higher newsprint and promotional costs will take the gloss off Thursday's full-year figures, with pre-tax profits of about £30 million against £7.1 million last time. Price rises during the first half suggest that newspaper profits will fail to match earlier expectations. Moves into other media areas, such as digital television, are not being warmly received by the City and could affect future growth.

**UNITED NEWS & MEDIA:** Full-year figures on Friday are likely to be distorted by exceptional items of up to £52 million, relating to losses at Channel 5 and merger provisions. Pre-tax profit estimates range from £280 million to £285 million, against £258.7 million last time. Earnings should be up 8 per cent at 37.6p. A total of £730 million has been spent on acquisitions since United Newspapers and MAID merged. Despite Channel 5 losses, the main businesses are expected to have performed strongly.

**RECKITT & COLMAN:** A pick-up in sales during the second half should offset what was judged as a dull underlying performance during the first six months. Full-year figures on Thursday should also reflect the benefits of recent restructuring, with pre-tax profits up from £285 million to between £317 million and £319 million. The payout is forecast to rise 8 per cent to 21.8p.

**ENTERPRISE OIL:** These figures on Thursday should show that the group has shrugged off the ill-effects of its abortive bid for Lasmo. A strong oil price will bolster net income by about 54 per cent, to £156.7 million, with earnings per share up a similar amount at 28.6p. The group remains prolific in exploration successes, the latest being the Abbot Field in the central North Sea.

**BRITISH VITA:** The strong recovery in profits reflected at the interim stage is likely to have continued in the second half. Full-year pre-tax profits today should come in at £54 million, against £47.4 million last time, with earnings up 11 per cent at 15.7p. Margins will have benefited from increased demand in Europe and the lower cost of raw materials. The payout will be up from 7.9p to 8.25p.

**BBA GROUP:** Operating profits should show a useful increase when the group reports tomorrow, although revenue will be down because of discontinued businesses. Pre-tax profits for the year are likely to come in at £144 million, compared with £118 million last time. There should be scope for a 1p increase in the dividend to 1p.

## THE SUNS AND STATISTICS

## TODAY

Interline, Ardagh, Cash Converters International, Domestic & General, Kleinwort Development Fund, Polypipe, Finlays, British Vita, Bruntcliffe Aggregates, Canowder Investments, CHG, Fairley Group, IMI, Intrust Justits, Laporte, Persimmon, Persona Group, Prudential Oil, Relian, Raylon Group, Sanction, Small Mort Treats Group, Spirax-Sarco Engineering. Economic statistics: UK February producer prices, US Treasury auction of short-term T-bills.

## TOMORROW

Interline, Murry Ventures, Redrow Group, Finlays, BBA Group, BPP Holdings, Church & Co, Cowle Group, Cousins Property Group, Excalibur International, Harrison & Crossfield, Independent Insurance Group, Kalon Group, Merchants Trust, Orange, Pilkington, Pilkington Glass Company, Robert Walter, Wellington Holdings, Yorkshire-Tyre Tees Television Holdings, Zeneca. Economic statistics: UK British Retail Consortium February retail sales survey, UK January new construction orders, US (Q4) revised labour productivity.

## WEDNESDAY

Interline, Corseco International, Drift Group, Finlays, Baynes (Charles), Bramall, Cawthron, Churnside, Haywood Williams, Instrum, Little Wies, Lionheart, Midland Independent Newspapers, Minerva, Reed International, Renwick Initial, Schroders, TeleWest, Eurospac. Economic statistics: UK January industrial/manufacturing output.

## THURSDAY

Interline, Stride, Finlays, Coats Viyella, Cawthron, Courts Consulting Group, Enterprise Oil, General Cable, Graham Group, Invesco, Jefferies Group, Legal & General, MAID, Mirror Group, Molina, Nealon Hurst, Reckitt & Colman, Tibury Douglas, United Newspapers. Economic statistics: US weekly jobless claims report, US February retail sales, US (Q4) current account deficit.

## FRIDAY

Interline, none scheduled. Finlays, Anglo Pacific Resources, Bilton, Mithras Investment Trust, United News & Media, Vitex.

## ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

## City takes post-election view

The City is now convinced that there will be no interest rate rises before the election and thoughts have begun to turn to the monetary outlook for the incoming government. Most forecasters believe that rates will need to rise from the middle of the year, but there is increasing optimism that they will not need to rise to the 7 per cent figure that some economists had been predicting.

This more optimistic outlook for rates should be backed up by factory gate

figures, which are published today. MMS International, the economic forecaster, predicts that producer prices output data will show a monthly rise of 0.2 per cent. The annual figure is expected to remain flat at 1.5 per cent. The industrial production figures, due on Wednesday, are expected to show a monthly rise of 0.7 per cent, against 0.6 per cent last month. But the manufacturing output figures are predicted to remain weak, with output expected to show a slight rise of 0.3 per cent — taking the annual rate to 1.5 per cent. Data

ALASDAIR MURRAY

## WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 38

## FARFALLA

(a) A candlefly or moth. From the Italian for a butterfly. "New Farfalla in her radiant shine, / Too bold, I burn these tender wings of mine."

## GRANONS

(a) The whiskers (of a cat). From the Old French *grenon*. Of Teutonic origin. Compare the Old Norse *gron* a moustache. "If the long hairs growing about her [the cat's] mouth (which some call Granons) be cut away, she loseth her courage." This cannot be true.

## FOVILLA

(a) The substance contained in pollen-cells. Modern Latin used in Linnaeus in 1766. In 1734 Linnaeus calls it *faria*. "Emitting a subtle and elastic vapour, or sort of fovilla which swims on the surface."

## GOR

(b) A chick or unfledged bird. Obsolete, except for dialect. Of unknown origin, but note the Old English *gorb* greedy, voracious. "The Old Birds of Prey, with their young Gors, which they were training up to swallow Kingdoms at once."

## SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1... Qxb2! 2 ax3 Rxb3 and Black forces mate, e.g. 3 Re1 Be3+ 4 Qxe1 Rb1# checkmate

## SUNDAY TIPS

*The Sunday Times*: Buy T&N, Celtic, Robert Walters, Avon Rubber, Hold, Zeneca. *The Sunday Telegraph*: Buy Midland Independent Newspapers, Orange, Booker, *The Mail on Sunday*: Buy Marks & Spencer, *The Observer*: Hold, Cadbury Schweppes, Royal & Sun Alliance. *Sunday Business*: Buy Charter, Consult, Hold, Crabtree.

## TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sale
Australia \$	2.14	1.98
Austria Sch	20.07	18.87
Belgium S	59.47	57.47
Bulgaria S	2.300	2.140
Cyprus Cyp	0.854	0.799
Denmark Kr	11.02	10.25
Ecuador M	8.80	8.15
France Fr	9.65	9.04
Germany Dm	2.91	2.70
Greece Dr	1.45	1.35
Hong Kong S	13.10	12.10
Iceland	120	100
Ireland Pt	1.71	1.61
Italy Lira	5.77	5.50
Japan Yen	209.00	193.00
Lithuania Ltl	0.504	0.494
Netherlands Gld	3.251	3.021
New Zealand S	2.44	2.22
Nicaragua Nis	11.00	10.50
Portugal Esc	267.00	239.50
S Africa Rand	7.75	6.98
Spain Peseta	244.00	227.50
Sweden Kr	12.00	11.20
Switzerland Fr	2.51	2.23
Turkey Lira	20.700	19.4700
Ukraine Gr	1.70	1.67

Rates for small denomination bank notes, only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to large sums of money. Rates etc at close of business on Friday.

## CHANGE ON WEEK

## THE POUND

US dollar 1.6052 (-0.0238)  
German mark 2.7580 (+0.0096)  
Exchange index 98.1 (0.2)  
Bank of England official close (4pm)

## STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2920.3 (+72.8)  
FTSE 100 4420.3 (+112.0)  
New York Dow Jones 7000.89 (+123.15)  
Tokyo Nikkei Avg 18198.74 (-358.26)

## An important announcement to our stockholders:

Copies of the 1996 Annual Report of Citicorp can now be obtained from:-  
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London WC2R 1HB.

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مكتبة من الأصل

# Proposals to protect assets from care costs

By MARIANNE CURPHEY, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

RETired people could pay annual insurance premiums to save their houses from being sold to pay future nursing home bills under proposals in a government White Paper to be issued today.

However, insurance experts believe that premiums are likely to be about 1 per cent of the value of the house annually, costing £50 a month for the owner of an average £60,000 home with £10,000 of savings.

The controversial and long-awaited draft Bill on long-term care, to be published by Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, will propose a partnership scheme whereby individuals may buy insurance to ring-fence their assets and

prevent a proportion of them being used to pay for care. It will not include proposals on immediate-needs annuities or equity release schemes.

Mr Dorrell will suggest that for every £1 of insurance taken out, the Government will "disregard" £1.50 of assets on top of the £10,000 an individual is already allowed to keep.

The proposals have already attracted criticism from charities that believe they will be beyond the means of most elderly people, and from insurers, who say that only 100,000 extra people will be helped.

They claim that two million could have benefited had the scheme protected a further £1 of assets for every £1 insured.

The proposed Bill is the result of consultation on options announced last May. Currently 20,000 people buy long-term care policies worth a total of £73 million in premium income every year.

Under the present means-testing system, people with assets worth less than £10,000 do not have to pay anything towards their long-term care costs. Those with between £10,000 and £16,000 have to make a contribution, and those with more — including their homes — have to meet the bill in full.

It is claimed that up to 40,000 people sell their homes each year to meet care fees, which can top £20,000 a year.

Peter Gatenby, appointed actuary and director of PPP lifetime care, expressed disappointment at the proposals. He said: "The Government could have increased the protection to £2 per £1, but has shied away from doing that because we have no idea how many people will want to buy such policies, and they are an open-ended commitment to governments of the future."

## Nomura's chief set to resign

HIDEO SAKAMAKI, the president of Nomura Securities Co, Japan's biggest stockbroker, is expected to resign to take the blame for suspected irregular deals now being investigated by Japan's securities watchdog (Robert Whyman writes).

The stockbroker admitted that it ran discretionary accounts for clients. These are alleged to be connected with *sokaiya* racketeers, who extort money from companies by threatening to expose shady business practices. Mr Sakamaki is reported to have offered to resign once the Securities and Exchange Surveillance Commission has completed its inquiry.



Thorntons has chocolate lollipops of Screaming Lord Sutch, left, Paddy Ashdown, John Major and Tony Blair

## Retailers seek shoppers' vote with election memorabilia

Political kitsch may prove to be an investment, Morag Preston finds

Election fever has already hit the high streets. Supermarkets, bars, bookshops, and novelty outlets are cashing in on the contest in a consumer frenzy that hails from America.

Cross-party political products are being licked, drunk, read, and worn. In conjunction with Tie Rack, both the Conservative and Labour Party have brought out a snazzy line in election neckwear. At £11.99 in silk, or £2 cheaper in polyester, the choice is between Labour's repeat roses on a red or even blue background or the Tories' red demon eyes on black. Tie Rack, which is still talking with the Liberal Democrats, will pay each party design fees of about £1,000.

If sales in caricature candles are anything to go by,

Labour and Conservative are currently neck and neck. Turnover at The Candle Shop in London's Covent Garden is expected to increase fivefold in the run up to a general election. Seven-inch wax models of an all-grey John Major and a smiling Tony Blair, at £7.95 each, are sold as the acceptable equivalent to the voodoo doll. "An awful lot of burning of the enemy goes on," says Sue Spear, who opened the shop in 1971. Ted Heath, Tony Benn, and Margaret Thatcher, are still popular, but Paddy Ashdown did not even make it into a mould. "He doesn't raise enough

feeling one way or another," says Ms Spear.

The recently opened Politics, a bookshop-cum-salon for Westminster groupies, is reporting a rush in £5 political postcards. Iain Dale, the owner and a former political lobbyist for the Tory party, took the idea for the shop from similar ones in Washington.

"People tend to buy memorabilia that makes fun of their own party," says Mr Dale.

For the first time, Penguin has introduced a series of paperback pocketbooks aimed at the virgin voter. Why Vote Labour? Why Vote Conservative?, and Why Vote

*Liberals*? are retailing at £3.99 each. The political parties boast their own catalogues, offering a range of brightly coloured gimmicks from baseball caps to bumper stickers. Hip young researchers at Conservative Central Office are rolling their computer mice over propaganda emblazoned "New Labour, New Danger".

In the food range, Thorntons has 49p chocolate lollipops cast in the likeness of political leaders. For the last general election, the confectioners sold more than 170,000 jolly lookalikes of John Major, Paddy Ashdown, and Neil Kinnock. This year, Tony Blair has replaced Mr Kinnock and Screaming Lord Sutch has been added to widen the appeal.

Not to miss out, Tesco has launched a poster campaign parodying political promises, and Asda will soon be lining its shelves with its Election Ales. Bottles of Tony's Tipple, Major's Mild and Ashdown's Ale will go on sale for £1.49 each. With cartoons of the leaders splashed across the beer labels, the supermarket chain is hoping that maybe one day they will become collectors' items.

Mr Jordan also attacked the ICS for "repeatedly renegeing on its self-imposed deadlines", leading to long delays in paying compensation. The ICS said that it was treating cases urgently but identifying claimants had taken longer than expected.

## BA left with a case to answer

MORE WOE for British Airways. Senior travel trade folk arrived in Berlin on Saturday for an industry shindig to discover the unthinkable — BA had left half their cases behind. The passengers, among more than 50,000 professionals heading for the mighty ITB Berlin travel trade show, had to wait 12 hours or more for the items to turn up. Several were heard loudly proclaiming that they would never fly the World's Favourite Airline again.

BA, which suffered unspeakable horrors last November when 11,000 cases piled up at Heathrow, pinned the blame on a faulty baggage conveyor — operated by BAA — but conceded: "At the end of the day, it impacts on the airline. It does us no good at all." BAA is installing new baggage equipment at Heathrow, and says there have been some teething problems. BA will consider awarding compensation to passengers caught up in the mess, but added: "It really depends upon the case." If they can find it.

## Whistle-blower

WORDS OF wisdom from Ken Bates. Pontificating on the subject of dodgy referees and the City, the chairman of Chelsea says: "It's said that results are too important to be left to an amateur's decision, particularly now that there's so much City investment in the game. Well, the City knew what the rules were when they came in and, although they are not averse to changing the City rules when it suits them, football is different."

One-nil to Mr Bates.



Bates telling it like it is

## The fur flies

THE Body Shop is taking Durham City Council to the cleaners. Anita Roddick's beauty haven has intervened in a dispute within the Labour-run council over its mayoral robes. Local controversy arose when the council decided to replace the muskrat trim on a 15-year-old robe with synthetic fur. The work just happened to coincide with the arrival of vegetarian Neil Griffin, who takes over as mayor in May. The £500 bill, including general repairs and cleaning, was criticised by Nigel Martin, Lib-Dem member, as a needless expense and pandering to animal rights groups. Now the Middlesbrough branch of The Body Shop has agreed to pick up the tab.

MORAG PRESTON

## Adviser's mis-selling move

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

KNIGHT WILLIAMS, the former financial adviser at the centre of a mis-selling scandal, has submitted proposals to the Investors Compensation Scheme (ICS) that could settle up to 1,200 of the compensation claims made against it.

The company has asked the ICS to help in identifying claimants, most of whom pensioners who may have lost up to £25 million in high-income investments it promoted.

which he said had amounted to a few hundred pounds for each investor. He urged investors to seek the group's advice before accepting any offers.

Mr Jordan also attacked the ICS for "repeatedly renegeing on its self-imposed deadlines", leading to long delays in paying compensation. The ICS said that it was treating cases urgently but identifying claimants had taken longer than expected.

## Something's afoot

RICHARD ROYDS is working round the clock in his attempt to persuade 200,000 City professionals to dress down for Red Nose Day. His crusade is to raise about £1 million in aid of Comic Relief. But what will this managing director of

## Tax loophole

NEWTON, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has given the go-ahead to a tax break for pensioners. The new rules will allow pensioners to withdraw up to £10,000 a year from their pension pots without incurring tax charges.

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## Benefits of EMU enthusiasm

Unless a lot of us have a late change of mind, or are deceiving the opinion pollsters, the Labour Party will win the May general election with a good working majority.

Economic life under the early stages of a Labour government has been well analysed — there is a broad agreement, for example, that interest rates will have to rise in the latter part of 1997 and early 1998 (although

probably to no more than 7 per cent), and that inflation will fall to close to 2.5 per cent at the end of 1997. These factors are largely legacies of an outgoing Tory Government and are well discounted by the gilt market.

The Budget planned for early summer might include details about a windfall tax on utilities. The size and shape of this tax will affect government finances and, therefore, the

market. However, Labour has been out of office for many years and it would be judicious for the new ministers to take a good, long look at the books rather than producing a hasty policy decision. It would be preferable if windfall tax details were delayed until a later Budget.

In any case, we think that the biggest impact Labour will have on the gilt market in the latter part of 1997 will come from a different source: its attitude to monetary union.

The Labour leadership is pro-monetary union, but, for all the talk of when would be the right time for sterling to join EMU, the fact remains that the party is first committed to a referendum on the subject. According to opinion polls, only a minority of British people are in favour of monetary union, although many of the others would hope to be better informed by the time a vote takes place.

It will be Labour's task (should the enthusiasm for monetary union survive the hostility of some backbenchers) to present arguments showing how much more beneficial life would be within EMU, compared with "isolation" outside it.

With effort, the party should be able to turn public opinion around. Just as many of us believed 20-odd years ago that we were voting for little more than closer trade links with near-Europe in the original Common Market referendum, the popular decision this time will probably owe more to how (and what) arguments are presented to us than to thorough analysis of the situation.

The best time for Labour to help to form the "right" opin-

ion is early in the life of the new Parliament, the honeymoon period when its popularity is at its peak. Consequently, we can expect the ruling party to talk up the benefits of EMU from the outset.

This is good news for the many gilt market bulls, whose premise is that sterling will eventually join EMU and that UK yields will converge to those on the Continent. Current gilt yields for ten-year maturities stand about 1.8 percentage points above comparable German and French bonds on a like-for-like basis.

This figure will surely fall if the dominant sentiment is of convergence to a common currency, even if there is a delay to the proposed EMU start date in 1999.

The most likely scenario for German bonds, for example, is that after hitting a mid-year peak, prices will fall in the second half of 1997 as economic recovery starts. Meanwhile, EMU optimism should prevent a sell-off in gilts, so the gilt bond yield spread narrows.

With good economic fundamentals, gilts have the potential to be the best-performing major bond market in 1997.

Enthusiasm for monetary union should ensure the fulfilment of that potential.

STEPHEN SCOTT

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson

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THE  
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Mercury Asset Management is wearing on the big day? "A pair of Levi's jeans — they don't make Dockers in size 42. I'm a great big chap, who has never worn sneakers in his life, and I don't intend to start now."

## Whistle-blower

WORDS OF wisdom from Ken Bates. Pontificating on the subject of dodgy referees and the City, the chairman of Chelsea says: "It's said that results are too important to be left to an amateur's decision, particularly now that there's so much City investment in the game. Well, the City knew what the rules were when they came in and, although they are not averse to changing the City rules when it suits them, football is different."

One-nil to Mr Bates.

## Business brains

OXFORD Molecular is staking its claim as Britain's most academic company. Most recently, Graham Richards has been appointed to head the new combined chemistry department at Oxford University. David Jackson, chief operating officer, is a professor at Nottingham University. Anthony Rees, a director, is a professor at Bath University; there are five Nobel laureates on its Scientific Advisory Board; and 73 out of 140 staff have either PhDs, DPhilcs or MScs. Professor Richards was the co-founder of Oxford Molecular, a database for the discovery of new medicines. Tall, handsome, and a born runner, he is known as "The Six Million Dollar Man" — not to mention the money he has made from the \$400 million public company.

In the food range, Thorntons has 49p chocolate lollipops cast in the likeness of political leaders. For the last general election, the confectioners sold more than 170,000 jolly lookalikes of John Major, Paddy Ashdown and Neil Kinnock. This year, Tony Blair has replaced Mr Kinnock and Screaming Lord Sutch has been added to widen the appeal.

Not to miss out, Tesco has launched a poster campaign parodying political promises, and Asda will soon be lining its shelves with its Election Ales. Bottles of Tony's Tipple, Major's Mild and Ashdown's Ale will go on sale for £1.49 each. With cartoons of the leaders splashed across the beer labels, the supermarket chain is hoping that maybe one day they will become collectors' items.

Two years ago, a Lady Thatcher teapot sold for nine times the original £20 price at Phillips the auctioneers. John Sandon, head of ceramics at Phillips, says: "Look out for something that's well produced and unusual — you may never get the chance again."

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SURELY IT'S TIME NORWICH UNION SENT OUT ITS POLICY CIRCULAR TO MEMBERS, INFORMING THEM OF ITS STOCK MARKET FLATION PROPOSALS?

A spokeswoman said: "We said we would be sending them out in the spring, and we keep getting calls from people reminding us that the crocuses are now well and truly in bloom." NU expects to start the mailing in the next few weeks.

## Something's afoot

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the Middlesbrough branch of The Body Shop has agreed to pick up the tab.



Oliver August on Asda's hopeful, and woes of MDs who would be MPs

# Only the brave attempt leap from boardroom to Commons

All political parties are courting the business vote in the run-up to a general election. Tony Blair schmoozes the City. Michael Heseltine fights back in anger to hold the Tories traditional business support.

For all their campaigning, however, the parties are being deserted by businessmen themselves. The number of parliamentary candidates with managerial experience in the private sector has fallen dramatically. Although the electorate is more interested than ever in economic competence, the commercially literate prefer to stay put rather than become involved in politics.

In the Conservative Party, the deal had always been that one first gets rich and then gets elected. While still at Oxford, Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister to be, famously mapped out, on the back of an envelope, his path from entrepreneurship to politics.

The opposite is increasingly the case today. Impoverished researchers and councillors enter the Commons and some end up lining their pockets with the help of lobbyists. Even that may be over. After the next election, the business acumen assembled in the Commons could reach an all-time low.

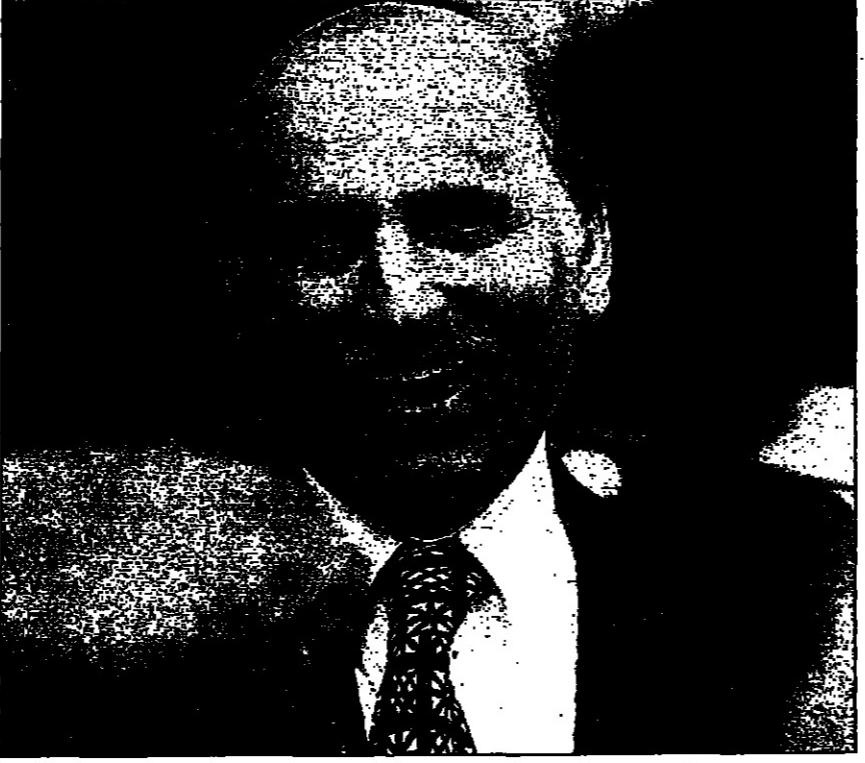
The Public Policy Unit, a think tank, has conducted a survey of future MPs. Andrew Lansley, one of the authors and a Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate himself, said: "The number of prospective candidates with business experience is in decline. The occupational background of the new intake has shifted away from traditional areas such as commerce, manufacturing and law."

The only area of business better represented now is financial services. After the 1980s boom in international finance, Lansley said: "Labour has far fewer trade unionists and fewer people from the shop floor. Many candidates now come from the voluntary sector, while the numbers from the private sector remain very small. The big bastions are from colleges and councils."

The Tories still have the largest business contingent, but it is primarily made up of analysts and merchant bankers rather than self-made industrialists or managers. Many Tory candidates are already pseudo-politicians; they



Ronnie Fearn, left, for the Liberal Democrats, and Labour's Mohammed Sarwar are rare as candidates from commerce



work for an MP or are public relations consultants trying to lobby Westminster.

On the basis of information supplied by the Public Policy Unit, one can calculate that only 15 of the 160 new parliamentary candidates most likely to win a seat come from managerial positions in the private sector and a further 14 from finance.

Why are so many undoubtedly ambitious business folk deserting the quest for power and glory? Richard Branson might get elected even if he stood for the Monster Raving Loony Party, such is his public appeal. Yet, he becomes unnaturally coy when asked about politics.

Millionaires at a recent City lunch agreed, as they tucked into their £30 steaks, that the idea of standing for Parliament was simply "off-putting". Some of them earn an MP's annual salary in a week. Getting out of bed for £43,000 per annum does not appeal.

Their predecessors 20 or 30 years ago had the option of entering politics while staying in business. However, constituents no longer tolerate gentlemen politicians and employers loathe part-time executives. Lansley said: "The sacrifice for bankers and other executives is substantial. Companies will not pay them hundreds of

thousands of pounds if they don't get 110 per cent effort."

Money is by no means the only factor putting businessmen off. Politics is risky, and a failed attempt enter Parliament could end a business career, as well as a political one. Having to campaign for months before an election puts severe strain on any executive's ability to do the day job.

There is also the prospect of years of backbench boredom. Ministerial jobs with powers to equal those of an executive director are few. Even in the era of Select Committees, most MPs are "lobby fodder".

The few moments in the limelight that a backbench MP may get are usually unwanted public scrutiny. The love child of an executive may go unnoticed. As a politician, the same executive will be hounded by the tabloids.

Given all the drawbacks, who are the brave businessmen still keen on public service? And why do they want to do it?

Jason Hollands, of BESt Investment, the brokers, the Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate for Easington, says: "Some people still have it in them. I want to see the bigger picture and engage in the battle of ideas."

Hollands's interest in politics was awakened at school

and while studying history at Oxford. He joined the Conservative Association and today he is the chairman of the Young Conservatives. "Oxford is such a great place," he muses. "It really focuses people and makes them obsessive about whatever they do."

When the official campaign begins, he will take a few weeks' holiday to woo the voters. Easington currently has a 27,000 Labour majority. It was Ramsay MacDonald's seat and is flanked by Tony Blair's and Peter Mandelson's constituencies. "Somehow I don't think it will be a holiday," says Hollands.

The few moments in the limelight that a backbench MP may get are usually unwanted public scrutiny. The love child of an executive may go unnoticed. As a politician, the same executive will be hounded by the tabloids.

Some prospective candidates have already fallen by the wayside before an election is called. John Evans, the original Tory hope for the Nottinghamshire seat of Sherwood, received a suspended prison sentence after trying to obtain a refund for an overcoat at Marks & Spencer last spring. A court was told that he had mass-produced fake Marks & Spencer receipts in an attempt to get even with the store chain after a planning dispute. Evans, the director of

Liberal Democrat — quotes from TV and press, not my description."

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a design company, withdrew his candidacy after being charged.

Another Tory prospective candidate, Hugh Neil, had hoped to be the party's first black MP, but overdid it. Neil had claimed to be chairman of the imaginary Kenton and Middlesex Building Society. Constituency bosses did not check, but deselected him when they found out.

Politics can be a far rockier path than business. Mohammed Sarwar, the Indo-Scottish millionaire Labour supporter, hit the headlines last May. For two years, he fought with local activists for the Glasgow Govan constituency. Labour's high command had to intervene when Sarwar lost a first constituency ballot in controversial circumstances. Losing an Asian, as well as a businessman, candidate would have been disastrous given the general lack of either. The £10 million cash-and-carry mogul eventually triumphed with the help of Walworth Road. However, few other successful businessmen would tolerate the ordeals that Sarwar had to endure to be a candidate.

Emboldened by success, Labour party chiefs rescued another candidate with a business background late last year. Fabian Hamilton was selected for Leeds North East after the leftwinger Liz Ward was deselected. However, Davies decided to leave as noisily as she had arrived.

The spotlight of publicity has shone hard on Hamilton's record as a company director. His business history includes two liquidated printing companies and seven county court judgments for bad debts. It is hardly an advertisement for Labour's new-found zeal for prudent capitalism.

Links between people of

commerce and the economics side of politics are a long tradition. Unusually, though, the main priority for the few remaining commercially literate politicians today will not be economic policy *per se*, but the European issue. The Conservative Howard Flight is the most vigorous exponent of a majority standpoint. "I have Eurosceptic views and I am in favour of a referendum on a single currency," he said. A Euro-friendly Tony Blair may yet despair of the men and women of business.

## Archie entertains an honourable ambition



Archie Norman: cream of the crop of Tory hopefuls

Provided the voters of Tunbridge Wells swallow their *amour-propre* and elect a shopkeeper, Archie Norman will be a star of the 1997 intake of Tory MPs. Asda's chairman is already being cast as the next Michael Heseltine. He certainly has flair, business experience and undisguised ambition.

Archie, as he is known to his family and to 75,000 Asda employees, has had a fairly-career so far. After Cambridge and Harvard he went to McKinsey, the management consultancy. His managerial skills, including the first-names-only policy, are McKinsey standard issue. So when he refers to Adair he is talking about the CBI's director-general, Adair Turner, McKinsey colleague.

Archie was made chief executive of Asda at 37, having been headhunted from the post of finance director at Kingfisher where he made his name. Both companies did famously well under his stewardship. At 42, he has taken on the chairmanship of the supermarket chain to devote more time to selling himself instead of the groceries. "Most businessmen don't achieve what they want to achieve early in life," he says without a hint of modesty. "I have been a director of an FTSE 100 company for 12 years. That kind of experience most people cannot match."

Parliament needs people with real-world business experience. Archie agrees: "Westminster should not be the domain of full-time professionals. I want to bring my background to bear. Business should

have proper representation in Parliament. But I am not someone with just a bunch of special interests. I have ideas, a fresh perspective."

In terms of ideas, Archie is a stormtrooper rather than an armchair general. He leads loudly from the front. His many campaigns at Asda have included full frontal attacks for Sunday trading, and over discounting of books and medicines. The campaigns, inevitably, involve television appearances where he champions the rights of ordinary trolley-pushing folk.

The biggest idea on his political shelf is Euroscepticism. "Under no foreseeable circumstances will the Tories agree to a single currency," he says. "It would be helpful to clarify our position before the election but the Prime Minister has handled the situation well. Business people are particularly concerned about the social chapter."

Archie already has the self-confidence of a Cabinet minister, a job he undoubtedly covets. The Asda chairman is not leaving his £500,000 position to squeak from the backbenches. He is seeking new commanding heights. "There are strong similarities between politicians and businessmen," he believes. "Both lead and manage large numbers of people. The same qualities are needed — forthrightness, independence, integrity. I am used to expressing myself so that 75,000 people can understand."

A look at Archie's leadership methods offers some clues to his political style. He

turned Asda from a debt-laden decline into a bright and profitable operation with the help of a little management voodoo. This included holding lotteries in which staff can win use of the company Jaguar for a month, forcing everyone to stand at meetings to encourage debate, and a red "don't disturb" cap which is passed around the head office. Sir Humphrey would presumably get the cap in the Archie ministry, constituents could be joy-riding in the ministerial limo and Cabinet meetings would become quasi-cocktail parties with everyone wearing name tags.

The idiosyncratic chairman is no stranger to gaffes. Tory elders were embarrassed when he told the *New Statesman* magazine that the party was destined to lose the election.

In another interview, for *Tatler*, Archie said he wanted to be an MP so that he could spend more time with his family. Labour helpfully pointed out that this was the usual Tory explanation for leaving the Commons after he had said that being a politician was one of the few jobs in the world "that we can do together. There is no way you could take your wife to work at Asda."

His election chances are good. Tunbridge Wells is still as safe a Tory seat as one can hope to get. If the fairy-tale continues, the Asda chairman may again rise fast and one day become the "Right Honourable Archie". Push Tunbridge Wells may even overcome its distaste and allow in an Asda store.

## RADIO CHOICE

# Water, water everywhere

Waterland. Radio 4, 2.00pm.

At what point does the here and now metamorphose into history? Steve Chambers's serialisation of Grahame Swift's novel, set in the reclaimed marshland of the Fens, poses the question in its opening few minutes. It is posed by Tom Crick, played by Roy Marsden, the history teacher narrating the story. In the classroom from which he is soon to be banished, Crick is a compelling teller of true tales. They are all to do with his ancestors, and most are inspired by the watery region that was, and is, their home. I say "was and is" because *Waterland* lives in both past and present. A complex structure, then, but not confusing so long as you keep on recalling Crick's self-portrait as "an expert on the past until time flows back on itself and the past returns".

Vaudville Red-Hot and Blue. Radio 2, 10.00pm.

The American singer Marilyn Middletown Pollack has a voice made for cabaret. Radio 2 must think highly of her because tonight marks the start of her third series of songs from *Vaudville Red-Hot and Blue*. She is stoutly supported by Steve Mellor's Chicago Hoods, a band that embraces some top-class soloists — a fact the live audience acknowledges by constantly bursting into applause. We expect this sort of thing from American audiences, but it's a rare happening up Birmingham way.

Peter Davison

## RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe and Boy Lard live from Manchester 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiley 2.00pm Nicky Campbell 4.00 Kevin Greening 6.15 Newsbeat 6.30 Evening Session with Steve Lamacq 8.30 Andy Kershaw 10.30 Mary Ann Hobbs 1.00am Clare Sturgess 4.00 Celia Warren with the Early Breakfast Show

## RADIO 2

6.00am Alan Lester 7.30 Sarah Kennedy 9.30 Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Thrower 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Chris Series 7.00 Steve Wright 7.30 The Moves 7.30 Malcolm Leycock with Dance Band Days 8.00 Big Band Special 8.30 The Lure of the Blues 9.00 Vandie's Hot Hot and Blue 9.30 See Change 10.00 The Jimmies 12.05am Steve Macdonald 3.00 Charles Lowe, Includes Pause for Thought

## RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 9.00 The Magazine with Diana Mordas 12.00 Monday with Mark, includes 12.35pm Moneybox 1.00 Radio 5 Live 2.00pm The National News 7.00 News Extra 7.35 Voices of Sport: Raymond Brooks-Yard 8.00 The Monday Match Liverpool v Newcastle United 10.00 News Talk with Jeremy Vine 11.00 Night Shift with Valerie Singleton 12.00 After Hours 2.00am Up All Night with Rhod Sharp

## TALK RADIO

5.00am Chris Ashley and Sandy Wren 7.00 Paul Ross 8.00 Sean O'Callaghan 12.00 Loraine Keay 2.00pm Tom Whyatt 3.45 Peter Deasy 7.00 Moz Dee's Spacetime 10.00 James Whale 1.00am Mike Dickin

## CLASSIC FM

4.00am Mark Griffiths 6.00 Mike Read 9.00 Stefan Buccatelli 12.00 Susannah Smith 2.00pm Concerto Salut Fleuret and Oboe Concerto in C major 3.00 Radio 2 National Concerto 7.00 Radio 2 8.30 Evening Concert: Berlin (Hungarian March); Schumann (Carnival Op 9); Strauss (Four Last Songs); Rachmaninov (Symphony No 1 in D minor Op 13) 10.00 Michael Mainprize 1.00am Mel Cooper

## VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Russ 'n' Jon's Breakfast Experience 10.00 Graham Dene 1.00pm Jeremy Clark 2.00pm Nicky Home 7.00 Paul Coyle (FM) / Robin Banks (AM) 10.00 Mark Forrest 2.00am Randal Lee Rose

## RADIO 3

6.00am On Air. Includes Bizet (Symphony in C); Weber (Clarinet Quintet in B flat, Op 34); Janacek (Sinfonietta). 9.00 Morning Collection. Includes Holst (Suite: Beni Mory); Bach (French Suite No 1 in D major, BWV812). 10.00 Musical Extravaganza: Stéphane Sèbe (Valse Triste); Garberék (Moldé Cantabile); Sonntag (Nibelungen March) 12.00 Composers of the Week: Campion, Clerambault and Mirecourt. 1.00pm Henry Boulle's *BBC Luncheon Concert*. Live from St John's Smith Square, London. Petersen Quartet, Haydn (String Quartet in D, Op 1 No 3); Schubert (String Quartet in B flat, Op 93); Mozart (String Quartet in B flat, Op 59).

2.10pm Classical Promises 3.45 Voices. A recital of French songs by the baritone Richard Jackson and the pianist Roger Vignoles (r) 4.30 The Baritones: Saxophone (25) (r)

## RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping (LW) 6.00 News Briefing 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 The Good Book: Horn Here and There 6.55 Weather 7.00 News 9.05 Start the Week, with Times columnist Melvyn Bragg and guests 10.00 News: The Lipman Test. Includes Armand Entomology with Michael Lipman (9/8) 10.15 Daily Service (LW) 10.30 On This Day (LW) 10.30 Woman's Hour 11.30 Money Box Live 12.00 News: You and Yours (FM) 12.25pm Chat with Ned Sherrin 12.55 Weather 1.00 The World at One 1.40 The Archers (FM) (r) 2.00 News: Waterland. See Choice (1/3) 3.00 News: London Shift 4.00 News: Kaleidoscope 4.45 Short Story: An Arrangement in Grey and Black. Susannah York reads Deborah Moggach's story 5.00 5.50pm Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather 6.00 Six O'Clock News

6.30 Just a Minute (r) 7.00 News 7.05 The Archers 7.20 The Food Programme (r) 7.45 The Monday Play: A Year and a Day, by Nick Stafford. A broad comedy about a couple that their estate is bankrupt. With Nicholas Farrell and Elaine Cleaton 7.55 Whispers and Maruspiels (1/4) (r) 9.30 Kaleidoscope (r) 9.59 Weather 10.00 The World Tonight, with Isabel Hilton 10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Lonely Londoners, by Sam Selvon. Read by Rudolph Walker (W) 11.00 The Living World (FM) Lionel Kelly and John Messener search for the polecats (1/6) (r) 11.00 Education Matters (LW) 11.30 The Big Picture (FM) (2/2) 11.30 The Big Picture (LW) 12.00 News incl 12.27am Weather 12.30am Late Books: The Hobbit, by J.R.R. Tolkien (6/15) (r) 12.45 Shipping Forecast 1.00 At World Service

## FREQUENCY GUIDE

RADIO 1, FM 97.6-98.8, RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.3, FM 90.2-92.4, RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198, MW 197, 220, 225, 230, 235, 240, 245, 250, 255, 260, 265, 270, 275, 280, 285, 290, 295, 300, 305, 310, 315, 320, 325, 330, 335, 340, 345, 350, 355, 360, 365, 370, 375, 380, 385, 390, 395, 400, 405, 410, 415, 420, 425, 430, 435, 440, 445, 450, 455, 460, 465, 470, 475, 480, 485, 490, 495, 500, 505, 510, 515, 520, 525, 530, 535, 540, 545, 550, 5

# Fishy stories, frolics, fundraisers' football

I was torn for a starting point this morning between a documentary about the Government's fishing policy and a costume romp called *Deacon Brodie*, which starred Billy Connolly. In the end I decided you would be more entertained by lunatic behaviour and implausible plot twists: therefore I shall start with the fishing policy.

People who think that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food is dedicated to screwing up the fish industry are making a grave error. The ministry has a wider brief and should be given due recognition for its other role: screwing up the fishing industry. Its problems are often reported as being the fault of swarthy Spaniards and heartless Brussels bureaucrats, so thank heaven for The Goldring Audit (Channel 4 Saturday).

Mary Goldring is a financial journalist of a certain age for

whom an intelligent thirst for knowledge matters more than big hair and lip gloss. She is in business reporting what Delia Smith is to cooking, complete with a set of no-nonsense stoves at her throat. Thus she was easy to pick out as one of the more unlikely personages ever to sail on PZ76, a Newlyn trawler aboard which Goldring spent five days.

She (and I) could swiftly bring a tear to your eye, for the image of the brave hunter-gatherer gone forth into wicked seas for no wage beyond a share of the dwindling catch is a strong one. But there is a difference between men who fish and the fishing industry: all industries are careless as to the finite nature of their resources and fishing is no exception. Goldring set aside sentiment and cut to key truths, of which I will highlight but one.

Politicians wish us to believe

that the Spanish have played a dirty trick by registering trawlers as British and thus taking a share of our fish quota. Eurosceptics are happy to let us think that the common fisheries policy, presided over by the feisty Emma Bonino, the EU's Fisheries Commissioner, is to blame for the fine mess we are in.

**A**s Goldring demonstrated, there is more to it than that. The fishing industry accepts that to save stocks we must fish less. That is why the EU, many years ago, started paying fishermen to decommission their boats. The deal was that money from Brussels would match funds from individual governments. Britain said no.

Bonino told Goldring: "This has been the choice of the UK Government, maybe to decide that the fishing sector was not a high priority, so they allocated very little funds." Britain eventually signed

up for the scheme in 1992 but that was too late. British fishermen, strapped for cash and denied decommissioning money, had no choice but to sell their boats and, crucially, the licences that went with them. Enter the Spanish.

Does the UK Government have an answer to these charges? We don't know. Everybody who matters stuck their gashes over the gunwales for this film, except Tony

Baldry, the British Fisheries Minister. Goldring said that Baldry would talk only about overall policy and he would only do that if the interview was shown at the end of the programme. So Baldry wanted to make the programme if he was going to appear in it. He did neither.

Goldring's solution to the fishing crisis is radical: forcibly reduce the fleet and ban the sale to fishmongers of endangered species such as cod and mackerel. "It is difficult to see anything less drastic having an effect," she said. Yes, I fear that it is.

Set alongside the grotesque Min of Ag, the story of an Edinburgh never-do-well who designs a gallows and is ultimately hanged from it is but a small leap in the believability stakes. *Deacon Brodie* (BBC1, Saturday) showed a great deal of promise, but delivered very little of it. The story is based on a true one, but drama

is not convincing just because it is authentic.

Billy Connolly seemed to enjoy himself as Brodie. The story is set in 1788, so Connolly's beard had been expertly removed and rearranged on the top of his head.

The BBC described the film as a "rollicking romp", therefore it contained several tarts with hearts, an array of inflating bosoms and a predictable escape from the gallows so that Brodie and his ladys love could sail into the sunset.

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